Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi

Volume III

3rd January, 1938

Talk 439.

D.: Rama asks: “Brahman being Pure, how can *maya* arise from Him and veil Him also? “Vasishta replies: “In pure mind associated with strong dispassion this question will not arise.” Of course in *advaita* (non-dualistic) philosophy there can be no place for *jiva, Isvara* and *maya*. Oneself sinking into the Self, the *vasanas* (tendencies) will entirely disappear, leaving no room for such a question.

M.: The answers will be according to the capacity of the seeker. It is said in the second chapter of *Gita* that no one is born or dies: but in the fourth chapter Sri Krishna says that numerous incarnations of His and of Arjuna had taken place, all known to Him but not to Arjuna. Which of these statements is true? Both statements are true, but from different standpoints. Now a question is raised: How can *jiva* rise up from the Self? I must answer. Only know Your Real Being, then you will not raise this question.

Why should a man consider himself separate? How was he before being born or how will he be after death? Why waste time in such discussions? What was your form in deep sleep? Why do you consider yourself as an individual?

D.: My form remains subtle in deep sleep.

M.: As is the effect so is the cause. As is the tree so is its seed. The whole tree is contained in the seed which later manifests as the tree. The expanded tree must have a substratum which we call *maya*. As a matter of truth there is neither seed nor tree. There is only Being.

D.: Vasanakshaya (total end of all predispositions) - *Mano nasa* (annihilation of mind) - *Atma-sakshatkara* (Realisation of the Self). They seem to be interdependent.

M.: The different expressions have only one meaning. They differ according to the individual's stage of progress. Dispassion, Realisation, all mean the same thing; also they say 'practice and dispassion'. Why practice? Because the modes of mind once subside and then rise up; again subside and rise up, and so on.

D.: Beginningless predisposition makes one do wrong. Without *jnana* this predisposition cannot vanish. But *jnana* looks almost impossible. Expiation alone cannot undo all the karma; for how much expiation will be needed! Look where we will! Everything looks difficult, even impossible. Association with the wise seems to be the only cure of all ills.

M.: What is to be done? Reality is One only. How can It be realised? Realisation is thus an illusion. Practice seems to be necessary. Who is to practise? Looking for the doer, the act and the accessories disappear.

Moreover, if Realisation is not present here and now, how can It, newly got, be of any use? What is permanent must be eternally present. Can it be newly got and be permanent also?

Realise what is present here and now. The sages did so before and still do that only. Hence they say that it looks as if newly got. Once veiled by ignorance and later revealed, Reality looks as if newly realised. But it is not new.

D.: Karma, *bhakti*, *yoga* and *jnana* and their subdivisions only confuse the mind. To follow the elders' words seems to be the only right thing to do. What should I hold? Please tell me. I cannot sift the *srutis* and *smritis*; they are too vast. So please advise me.

(No answer.)

Talk 440.

D.: Without logic, without learned terminology, please instruct me the way to the Bliss of Self. Let it be of Guru's grace only.

M.: Have a clear idea of your requirement. Who seeks to gain what? Then ask the method.

D.: Bliss manifests occasionally but I am unable to describe it. At times there is illumination, but is it the Reality? If so, how to make

it permanent? The method must be simple. Please make it clear without logic, learned discussions or mystifying words.

(No answer.)

Another visitor asked: Please tell me which is the most efficacious of all the methods, *e.g.*, prayer to God, Guru *anugraha*, *i.e.*, master's grace, concentration of mind, etc.

M.: The one is the consequence of the other. Each of them leads to the next stage. They form a continuous whole. God, Guru, and the Self are not different. They are one and the same. Therefore the methods offer no choice.

Talk 441.

Mr. Pannalal, I. C. S., a high Government official from Allahabad, with his wife, a highly cultured lady, and Mr. Brijnarayan, a retired judge, were on a visit for a week. The night previous to their departure they wanted to have their doubt cleared. Their doubt was:

We had a great sage for our Guru. He advised us to "take the name of Hari," saying that it is all in all; no effort is necessary for concentrating the mind. Concentration will come of itself if Harinam is persisted in. So we are doing it. The Guru passed away. We felt like a rudderless ship in mid-ocean. In our anxiety to find a safe guide we read and heard of you and so desired to come here. Our desire has been fulfilled after two years' longing. On coming here and hearing Sri Bhagavan we understand that the Master teaches *Atma-vichara* (self-quest). This is the method of knowledge (*jnana marga*), whereas the other master taught us *bhakti marga* (method of devotion).

What shall we do now? Are we to give up the other method and take to this new method? If once we change shall we not change many times more according to the masters we meet? What progress can be made by such frequent changes? Pray remove this doubt and bless us.

The Master referred the gentleman to an article in the September number of *Vision*, a monthly journal issued by the Anandasram. Kanhangad.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE DIVINE NAME ACCORDING TO ST. NAMDEV

The name permeates the entire universe densely; who can tell to what depths in the nether regions and to what height in the heaven It extends?

The ignorant fools undergo the eighty-four lakhs of species of births, not knowing the essence of things. The Name is immortal. Forms are innumerable but Name is all that. The Name itself is form and form itself is Name. There is no distinction between Name and form. God became manifest and assumed Name and form. Hence the Name the Vedas have established. Beware, there is no mantram beyond the Name. Those who say otherwise are ignorant fools. Name is Keshava Himself. This is known only to the loving devotees of the Lord.

The all-pervading nature of the Name can only be understood when one recognises his own 'I'. When one's own name is not recognised, it is impossible to get all-pervading Name. When one knows oneself then one finds the Name everywhere.

None can realise the Name by the practice of knowledge, meditation or austerity. Surrender yourself at first at the feet of the Guru and learn to know who the 'I' in you is. After finding the source of that 'I', merge your individuality in that Oneness - which is Self-existent and devoid of all duality. It is that Name that permeates the three worlds.

The Name is *Paramatman* Itself where there is no action arising out of *dvaita* (duality).

8th January, 1938

Talk 442.

While explaining a stanza of his own Sri Bhagavan observed: The sun illumines the universe, whereas the Sun of Arunachala is so dazzling that the universe is obscured and an unbroken brilliance remains. But it is not realised in the present state and can be realised only if the lotus of the heart blossoms. The ordinary lotus blossoms in the light of the visible sun, whereas the subtle Heart blossoms only before the Sun of Suns. May Arunachala make my heart blossom so that His unbroken brilliance may shine all alone!

Further on, Sri Bhagavan continued: The mirror reflects objects; yet they are not real because they cannot remain apart from the mirror.

Similarly, the world is said to be a reflection in the mind as it does not remain in the absence of mind. The question arises: if the universe is a reflection, there must be a real object known as the universe in order that it might be reflected in the mind. This amounts to an admission of the existence of an objective universe. Truly speaking, it is not so.

Therefore the dream illustration is set forth. The dream world has no objective existence. How then is it created? Some mental impressions should be admitted. They are called *vasanas*. How were the *vasanas* in the mind? The answer is: they were subtle. Just as a whole tree is contained potentially in a seed, so the world is in the mind.

Then it is asked: A seed is the product of the tree which must have existed once in order that it may be reproduced. So the world also must have been there some time. The answer is, No! There must have been several incarnations to gather the impressions which are re-manifested in the present form. I must have existed before as I do now. The straight way to find an answer will be to see if the world is there. Admitting the existence of the world I must admit a seer who is no other than myself. Let me find myself so that I may know the relation between the world and the seer. When I seek the Self and abide as the Self there is no world to be seen. What is the Reality then? The seer only and certainly not the world.

Such being the truth the man continues to argue on the basis of the reality of the world. Whoever asked him to accept a brief for the world?

Yoga Vasishta clearly defines Liberation as the abandonment of the false and remaining as Being.

Talk 443.

A visitor asked: The illustration of the mirror relates to the sense of sight only. The world is perceived by the other senses also. Can the unreality be established in relation to the other senses as well?

M.: A figure on the screen in the cinema show appears to watch the whole world. What is the reality behind the subject and the object in the same show? An illusory being watches an illusory world.

D.: But I am the witness of the show.

M.: Certainly you are. You and the world are as real as the cinema figure and the cinema world.

Talk 444.

An advocate visitor: The mind becomes aware of the world through the senses. When the senses are active, one cannot help feeling the existence of the world. How can karma yoga be of any use for pure awareness?

M.: The world is perceived by the mind through the senses. It is of the mind. The seer sees the mind and the senses as within the Self and not apart from it. The agent, remaining unaffected by the actions, gets more purified until he realises the Self.

9th January, 1938

Talk 445.

Explaining a stanza in *Aksharamanamalai* Sri Bhagavan said that *mowna* is the highest form of *upadesa*. It signifies 'silence' as master, disciple and practiser. Three *sanyasins*, who were visiting Sri Bhagavan, began a discussion.

D.: If one remained quiet how is action to go on? Where is the place for karma yoga?

M.: Let us first understand what Karma is, whose Karma it is and who is the doer. Analysing them and enquiring into their truth, one is perforce obliged to remain as the Self in peace. Nevertheless the actions will go on.

D.: How will the actions go on if I do not act?

M.: Who asks this question? Is it the Self or another? Is the Self concerned with actions?

D.: No, not the Self. It is another, different from the Self.

M.: So it is plain that the Self is not concerned with actions and the question does not arise.

D.: I agree.

Another asked: What is the state of the realised man? Is he not acting?

M.: The question implies that the realised man is not the questioner. Why should you concern yourself with another? Your duty is to look to yourself and not ask of others.

D.: The scriptures hold him up as the ideal.

M.: Certainly. He is the ideal. You should realise the Self. Even if his state be now described, your understanding of it will be only according to your capacity. You admit that your capacity is limited.

The scriptures say that the realised state admits of no limits. So then, the only way to understand his state is to realise the Self and experience the state. If the question arises afterwards the answer will be found.

Another visitor asked: There is differentiation made between the sentient and the insentient (*chit* and *jada*) in the opening verse of *Upadesa Sara*.

M.: The *Upadesa* is from the standpoint of the hearer. There is no truth in the insentient (*jada*). One whole consciousness (*chit*) prevails all alone.

24th January, 1938

Talk 446.

Mr. Grant Duff was in the hall. Sri Bhagavan was mentioning some new publications and *Maha Yoga* among others. He also remarked that Mr. G. D. having read *Sat Darsana Bhashya* would be surprised at the different view of *Maha Yoga*. Both claim to represent Sri Bhagavan's philosophy; but they differ so much that *Maha Yoga* actually condemns the other.

Someone cited the curious claim of *Sat Darsana Bhashya* that individuality is retained even after the loss of ego.

Sri Bhagavan remarked:

What is to be done? The Upanishads say: *Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavati* (Knower of Brahman becomes Brahman). There are more than one *Brahmavid* at a time. "Are all of them the same? Are they not separate?" So ask some persons. They look to the bodies only. They do not look to the realisation. There is no difference in the realisation of the *Brahmavid*. That is the Truth. But when the question is raised from the standpoint of the body the reply is necessarily bound to be "Yes. They are different". This is the cause of the confusion.

Mr. G. Duff: The Buddhists deny the world; the Hindu philosophy admits its existence, but says that it is unreal. Am I right?

M.: The difference of view is according to the difference in the angles of vision.

D.: They say that Sakti creates the world. Is the knowledge of unreality due to the unveiling of *maya*?

M.: All admit Sakti's creation. What is the nature of the Creatrix? It can only be in conformity with the nature of the creation. The Creatrix is of the same nature as Her creation.

D.: Are there degrees of illusion?

M.: Illusion is itself illusory. Illusion must be seen by one beyond it. Can such a seer be subject to illusion? Can he then speak of degrees of illusion?

There are scenes floating on the screen in a cinema show. Fire appears to burn buildings to ashes. Water seems to wreck vessels. But the screen on which the pictures are projected remains unscorched and dry. Why?

Because the pictures are unreal and the screen is real.

Again reflections pass through a mirror; but the mirror is not in any way affected by the quality or quantity of the reflections on it.

So the world is a phenomenon on the single Reality, which is not affected in any manner. Reality is only one.

The discussion about illusion is due to the difference in the angle of vision. Change your angle of vision to one of *jnana* and then find the universe to be only Brahman. Being now in the world, you see the world as such. Get beyond it and this will disappear: the Reality alone will shine.

Talk 447.

Sri Bhagavan said that a saint Namah Sivaya who was formerly living in Arunachala must have undergone considerable difficulties. For he has sung a song saying: "God proves the devotee by means of severe ordeals. A washerman beats the cloth on a slab, not to tear it, but only to remove the dirt."

25th January, 1938

Talk 448.

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF NAMDEV'S "PHILOSOPHY OF THE DIVINE NAME."

I. The Name permeates densely the sky and the lowest regions and the entire universe. Who can tell to what depths in the nether regions and to what height in the heavens It extends? The ignorant undergo the eighty-four lakhs of species of births, not knowing the essence of things. Namdev says the Name is immortal. Forms are innumerable, but the Name is all that.

II. The Name itself is form; and form itself is Name. There is no distinction between Name and form. God became manifest and assumed Name and form. Hence the Name the Vedas have established. Beware, there is no *mantra* beyond the Name. Those who say otherwise are ignorant. Namdev says the Name is Keshava Himself. This is known only to the loving devotees of the Lord.

III. The all-pervading nature of the Name can only be understood when one recognises his 'I'. When one's own name is not recognised, it is impossible to get the all-pervading Name. When one knows oneself, then one finds the Name everywhere. To see the Name as different from the Named creates illusion. Namdev says, "Ask the Saints."

IV. None can realise the Name by practice of knowledge, meditation or austerity. Surrender yourself first at the feet of the Guru and learn to know that 'I' myself is that Name. After finding the source of that 'I', merge your individuality in that one-ness, which is Self-existent and devoid of all duality. That which pervades beyond *dwaita* and *dwaitatita*, that Name has come into the three worlds. The Name is *Para Brahman* itself, where there is no action arising out of duality.

When Sri Bhagavan had read this, a certain musician came into the hall and began to sing Tyagaraja *Kirtanas* in Telugu. One of them says: "Find the source of the sound which is transcendental (*mooladhara sabda*) by diving deep like a pearl-diver diving for pearls." Then again another song was: "For a man who has controlled his mind where is the use of *tapasya*? Give up 'I-am-the-body' idea and realise 'I am not; Thou art all'."

This song was translated to Mr. G. D. who was then in the hall.

Mr. G. D. asked: Is it necessary to control one's breath? What becomes of the man who has not practised breath-control?

M.: Breath-control is only an aid for diving deep. One may as well dive down by control of mind. On the mind being controlled, the breath becomes controlled automatically. One need not attempt breath-control; mind-control is enough. Breath-control is recommended for the man who cannot control his mind straightaway.

Naham - I am not this - corresponds to *rechaka*

Koham - Who am I? (search for the I) - corresponds to *puraka*

Soham - He am I; (The Self alone) - corresponds to *kumbhaka*.

So these are the functions of *pranayama*.

Again the three formulae are:

Na - *Aham* (Not - I).

Ka - *Aham* (Who - I).

Sa - *Aham* (He - I).

Delete the prefixes and hold on to the common factor in all of them. That is *Aham*-'I', that is the gist of the whole matter.

Later on Sri Bhagavan referred to the songs and said: Tyagaraja says well. The mind should be controlled. The question arises "What is mind?" He himself answers in the next couplet, saying that it is the "I-am-the-body" idea. The next question is how the control is effected. He answers again, saying "By complete surrender. Realise that I am not and that all is He." The song is fine and compact. He also mentions the other method, namely, control of breath.

31st January, 1938

Talk 449.

After Mr. G. D. had left, there was some reference to his visit to the Asramam. Sri Bhagavan remarked, "Some *Sakti* draws people from all parts of the globe to this centre." A devotee aptly said, "That *Sakti* is not different from Sri Bhagavan." Sri Bhagavan immediately remarked, "What *Sakti* drew me here originally? The same *Sakti* draws all others as well."

Sri Bhagavan was, happily, in the mood to relate the following stories.

I. There was king with a devoted queen. She was a devotee of Sri Rama and yearned that her husband should similarly be a devotee. One night she found that the king mumbled something in his sleep. She kept her ears close to his lips and heard the word ‘Rama’ repeated continually as in *japa*. She was delighted and the next day ordered the minister to hold a feast. The king having partaken of the feast asked his wife for an explanation. She related the whole occurrence and said that the feast was in gratitude to God for the fulfilment of her long cherished wish. The king was however annoyed that his devotion should have been found out. Some say that having thus betrayed God he considered himself unworthy of God and so committed suicide. It means that one should not openly display one’s piety. We may take it that the king told the queen not to make a fuss over his piety and they then lived happily together.

II. THONDARADIPODI (*Bhaktanghrirenu*) ALWAR: One who delights in the dust of the feet of devotees. A devotee (of this name) was keeping a plot of land in which he grew *tulasi*, the sacred basil, made garlands of it, and supplied the same to the God in the temple. He remained a bachelor and was respected for his life and conduct. One day two sisters, who lived by prostitution, walked near the garden and sat under a tree. One of them said, “How disgusting is my life that I soil my body and mind every day. This man’s life is most desirable.” The other replied, “How do you know his mind? Maybe he is not as good as he appears to be. The bodily functions may be forcibly controlled and the mind may be revelling in riotous thoughts. One cannot control one’s *vasanas* as easily as the physical frame.”

The former said, “The actions are only the indices of the mind. His life shows his mind to be pure.”

The other said, “Not necessarily. His mind has not been proved as yet.”

The first challenged her to prove his mind. She accepted. The second desired to be left alone with only a shred of garment in which to clothe herself. The first sister returned home, leaving the other alone with flimsy clothing. As the latter continued to remain under the tree, she appeared penitent and humble. The saint noticed her and approached her after some time. He asked what had happened to her

that she looked so lowly. She pleaded penitence for her past life, desired to lead a purer and nobler life and finished with a prayer to him to accept her humble services in the garden or attendance on himself. He advised her to return home and lead a normal life. But she protested. So he detained her for watering the *tulasi* plants. She accepted the function with delight and began to work in the garden.

One rainy night this woman was found standing under the eaves of the thatched shed in which the saint was. Her clothes were dripping and she was shivering with cold. The master asked why she was in such a pitiable state. She said that her place was exposed to the rains and so she sought shelter under the eaves and that she would retire as soon as the rain ceased. He asked her to move into the hut and later told her to change her wet clothes. She did not have dry cloth to put on. So he offered her one of his own clothes. She wore it, still later she begged permission to massage his feet. He consented. Eventually they embraced.

The next day she returned home, had good food and wore fine clothes. She still continued to work in the garden.

Sometimes she used to remain long in her home. Then this man began to visit her there until he finally lived with her. Nevertheless he did not neglect the garden nor the daily garlands for God. There was public scandal regarding his change of life. God then resolved to restore him to his old ways and so assumed the shape of the saintly devotee himself. He appeared to the *dasi* and secretly offered her a rich present, an anklet of God.

She was very pleased with it and hid it under her pillow. He then disappeared. All these were secretly observed by a maid servant in the house.

The ornament was found missing in the temple. The worshipper reported the loss to the proper authorities. They offered a tempting reward for anyone who would give the clue for the recovery of the lost property. The maid servant afforded the clue and claimed the reward. The police recovered the ornament and arrested the *dasi* who said that the devotee gave her the same. He was then roughly handled. A supernatural voice said. “I did it. Leave him alone.”

The king and all others were surprised. They fell prostrate at the man's feet and set him free. He then led a better and nobler life.

III. KADUVELI SIDHAR was famed as a very austere hermit. He lived on the dry leaves fallen from trees. The king of the country heard of him, saw him and offered a reward for the one who would prove this man's worth. A rich *dasi* agreed to do it. She began to live near the recluse and pretended to attend on him. She gently left pieces of *pappadam* along with the dry leaves picked by him. When he had eaten them she began to leave other kinds of tasty food along with the dry leaves. Eventually he took good tasty dishes supplied by her. They became intimate and a child was born to them. She reported the matter to the king.

The king wanted to know if she could prove their mutual relationship to the general public. She agreed and suggested a plan of action. Accordingly the king announced a public dancing performance by that *dasi* and invited the people to it. They gathered there and she also appeared, but not before she had given a dose of physic to the child and left it in charge of the saint at home.

The dance was at its height here; the child was crying at home for the mother. The father took the babe in his arms and went to the dancing performance. She was dancing hilariously. He could not approach her with the child. She noticed the man and the babe. She contrived to kick her legs in the dance so as to unloose one of her anklets just as she approached the place where the saint was. She gently lifted her foot and he tied the anklet. The public shouted and laughed. But he remained unaffected. Yet to prove his worth, he sang a Tamil song meaning:

> "For victory, let go my anger! I release my mind when it rushes away. If it is true that I sleep day and night quite aware of my Self, may this stone burst into twain and become the wide expanse!"

Immediately the stone (idol) burst with a loud noise The people were astounded.

Sri Bhagavan continued:

Thus he proved himself an unswerving *jnani*. One should not be deceived by the external appearance of *jnani*. Thus *Vedantachudamani* - V. 181.

Its meaning is as follows:

Although a *jivanmukta* associated with body may, owing to his *prarabdha*, appear to lapse into ignorance or wisdom, yet he is only pure like the ether (*akasa*) which is always itself clear. whether covered by dense clouds or cleared of clouds by currents of air. He always revels in the Self alone, like a loving wife taking pleasure with her husband alone, though she attends on him with things obtained from others (by way of fortune, as determined by her *prarabdha*). Though he remains silent like one devoid of learning, yet his supineness is due to the implicit duality of the *vaikhari vak* (spoken words) of the Vedas; his silence is the highest expression of the realised non-duality which is after all the true content of the Vedas. Though he instructs his disciples, yet he does not pose as a teacher, in the full conviction that the teacher and disciple are mere conventions born of illusion (*maya*), and so he continues to utter words (like *akasvani*); if on the other hand he mutters words incoherently like a lunatic, it is because his experience is inexpressible like the words of lovers in embrace. If his words are many and fluent like those of an orator, they represent the recollection of his experience, since he is the unmoving non-dual One without any desire awaiting fulfilment. Although he may appear grief-stricken like any other man in bereavement, yet he evinces just the right love of and pity for the senses which he earlier controlled before he realised that they were mere instruments and manifestations of the Supreme Being. When he seems keenly interested in the wonders of the world, he is only ridiculing the ignorance born of superimposition. If he appears indulging in sexual pleasures, he must be taken to enjoy the ever-inherent Bliss of the Self, which, divided Itself into the Individual Self and the Universal Self, delights in their reunion to regain Its original Nature. If he appears wrathful he means well to the offenders. All his actions should be taken to be only divine manifestations on the plane of humanity. There should not arise even the least doubt as to his being emancipated while yet alive. He lives only for the good of the world.

Sri Bhagavan now warned the hearers against the mistake of disparaging a *jnani* for his apparent conduct and again cited the story of Parikshit. He was a still-born child. The ladies cried and appealed to Sri Krishna to save the child. The sages round about wondered how Krishna was going

to save the child from the effects of the arrows (*apandavastra*) of Asvatthama. Krishna said, "If the child be touched by one eternally celibate (*nityabrahmachari*) the child would be brought to life." Even Suka dared not touch the child. Finding no one among the reputed saints bold enough to touch the child, Krishna went and touched it, saying, "If I am eternally celibate (*nityabrahmachari*) may the child be brought to life." The child began to breathe and later grew up to be Parikshit.

Just consider how Krishna surrounded by 16,000 *gopis* is a *brahmachari*! Such is the mystery of *jivanmukti*! A *jivanmukta* is one who does not see anything separate from the Self.

If however a man consciously attempts to display *siddhis* he will receive only kicks.

3rd February, 1938

Talk 450.

Miss Umadevi, a Polish lady convert to Hinduism, asked Sri Bhagavan: I once before told Sri Bhagavan how I had a vision of Siva at about the time of my conversion to Hinduism. A similar experience recurred to me at Courtallam. These visions are momentary. But they are blissful. I want to know how they might be made permanent and continuous. Without Siva there is no life in what I see around me. I am so happy to think of Him. Please tell me how His vision may be everlasting to me.

M.: You speak of a vision of Siva. Vision is always of an object. That implies the existence of a subject. The value of the vision is the same as that of the seer. (That is to say, the nature of the vision is on the same plane as that of the seer.) Appearance implies disappearance also. Whatever appears must also disappear. A vision can never be eternal. But Siva is eternal

The *pratyaksha* (vision) of Siva to the eye signifies the existence of the eyes to see; the *buddhi* (intellect) lying behind the sight; the seer behind the *buddhi* and the sight; and finally the Consciousness underlying the seer. This *pratyaksha* (vision) is not as real as one imagines it to be, because it is not intimate and inherent; it is not first-hand. It is the result of several successive phases of Consciousness. Of these, Consciousness alone does not vary. It is eternal. It is Siva. It is the Self.

The vision implies the seer. The seer cannot deny the existence of the Self. There is no moment when the Self as Consciousness does not exist; nor can the seer remain apart from Consciousness. This Consciousness is the eternal Being and the only Being. The seer cannot see himself. Does he deny his existence because he cannot see himself with the eyes as *pratyaksha* (in vision)? No! So, *pratyaksha* does not mean seeing, but BE-ing.

"To BE" is to realise - Hence I AM THAT I AM. I AM is Siva. Nothing else can be without Him. Everything has its being in Siva and because of Siva.

Therefore enquire "Who am I?" Sink deep within and abide as the Self. That is Siva as BE-ing. Do not expect to have visions of Him repeated. What is the difference between the objects you see and Siva? He is both the subject and the object. You cannot be without Siva. Siva is always realised here and now. If you think you have not realised Him it is wrong. This is the obstacle for realising Siva. Give up that thought also and realisation is there.

D.: Yes. But how shall I effect it as quickly as possible?

M.: This is the obstacle for realisation. Can there be the individual without Siva? Even now He is you. There is no question of time. If there be a moment of non-realisation, the question of realisation can arise. But as it is you cannot be without Him. He is already realised, ever realised and never non-realised.

Surrender to Him and abide by His will whether he appears or vanishes; await His pleasure. If you ask Him to do as you please, it is not surrender but command to Him. You cannot have Him obey you and yet think that you have surrendered. He knows what is best and when and how to do it. Leave everything entirely to Him. His is the burden: you have no longer any cares. All your cares are His. Such is surrender. This is *bhakti*.

Or, enquire to whom these questions arise. Dive deep in the Heart and remain as the Self. One of these two ways is open to the aspirant.

Sri Bhagavan also added: There is no being who is not conscious and therefore who is not Siva. Not only is he Siva but also all else of which he is aware or not aware. Yet he thinks in sheer ignorance that

he sees the universe in diverse forms. But if he sees his Self he is not aware of his separateness from the universe; in fact his individuality and the other entities vanish although they persist in all their forms. Siva is seen as the universe. But the seer does not see the background itself. Think of the man who sees only the cloth and not the cotton of which it is made; or of the man who sees the pictures moving on the screen in a cinema show and not the screen itself as the background; or again the man who sees the letters which he reads but not the paper on which they are written. The objects are thus Consciousness and forms. But the ordinary person sees the objects in the universe but not Siva in these forms. Siva is the Being assuming these forms and the Consciousness seeing them. That is to say, Siva is the background underlying both the subject and the object, and again Siva in Repose and Siva in Action, or Siva and Sakti, or the Lord and the Universe. Whatever it is said to be, it is only Consciousness whether in repose or in action. Who is there that is not conscious? So, who is not realised? How then can questions arise doubting realisation or desiring it? If 'I' am not *pratyaksha* to me, I can then say that Siva is not *pratyaksha*.

These questions arise because you have limited the Self to the body, only then the ideas of within and without, of the subject and the object, arise. The objective visions have no intrinsic value. Even if they are everlasting they cannot satisfy the person. Uma has Siva always with Her. Both together form *Ardhanariswara*. Yet she wanted to know Siva in His true nature. She made *tapas*. In her *dhyana* she saw a bright light. She thought: "This cannot be Siva for it is within the compass of my vision. I am greater than this light." So she resumed her *tapas*. Thoughts disappeared. Stillness prevailed. She then realised that BE-ing is Siva in His true nature.

Muruganar cited Appar's stanza:- "To remove my darkness and give me light, Thy Grace must work through ME only."

Sri Bhagavan mentioned Manickavachagar's:

"We do *bhajana* and the rest. But we have not seen nor heard of those who had seen Thee." One cannot see God and yet retain individuality. The seer and the seen unite into one Being. There is no cogniser, nor cognition, nor the cognised. All merge into One Supreme Siva only!

4th February, 1938

Talk 451.

Mr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, Reader in Philosophy, Madras University, arrived this night. He had a doubt which he said had been cleared on reading Sarma's commentary on "Knowledge of Self". The doubt was:

How can the world be an imagination or a thought? Thought is a function of the mind. The mind is located in the brain. The brain is within the skull of a human being, who is only an infinitesimal part of the universe. How then can the universe be contained in the cells of the brain?

Sri Bhagavan answered saying: So long as the mind is considered to be an entity of the kind described, the doubt will persist. But what is mind? Let us consider. The world is seen when the man wakes up from sleep. It comes after the 'I-thought'. The head rises up. So the mind has become active. What is the world? It is objects spread out in space. Who comprehends it? The mind. Is not the mind, which comprehends space, itself space (*akasa*)? The space is physical ether (*bhootakasa*). The mind is mental ether (*manakasa*) which is contained in transcendental ether (*chidakasa*). The mind is thus the ether principle, *akasa tattva*. Being the principle of knowledge (*jnana sattva*), it is identified with ether (*akasa*) by metaphysics. Considering it to be ether (*akasa*), there will be no difficulty in reconciling the apparent contradiction in the question. Pure mind (*suddha manas*) is ether (*akasa*). The dynamic and dull (*rajas* and *tamas*) aspects operate as gross objects, etc. Thus the whole universe is only mental.

Again, consider a man who dreams. He goes to sleep in a room with doors closed so that nothing can intrude on him while asleep. He closes his eyes when sleeping so that he does not see any object. Yet when he dreams he sees a whole region in which people live and move about with himself among them. Did this panorama get in through the doors? It was simply unfolded to him by his brain. Is it the sleeper's brain or in the brain of the dream individual? It is in the sleeper's brain. How does it hold this vast country in its tiny cells? This must explain the oft-repeated statement that the whole universe is a mere thought or a series of thoughts.

A Swami asked: I feel toothache. Is it only a thought?

M.: Yes.

D.: Why can I not think that there is no toothache and thus cure myself?

M.: When engrossed in other thoughts one does not feel the toothache. When one sleeps toothache is not felt.

D.: But toothache remains all the same.

M.: Such is the firm conviction of the reality of the world that it is not easily shaken off. The world does not become, for that reason, any more real than the individual himself.

D.: Now there is the Sino-Japanese war. If it is only in imagination, can or will Sri Bhagavan imagine the contrary and put an end to the war?

M.: The Bhagavan of the questioner is as much a thought as the Sino-Japanese war. (Laughter.)

7th February, 1938

Talk 452.

Mr. Dhar, I. C. S., a high Officer and his wife, both young, highly cultured and intelligent, are on a visit here. But they fell ill since they arrived here. She desired to know how meditation could become steady.

M.: What is meditation? It consists in expulsion of thoughts. All the present troubles are due to thoughts and are themselves thoughts. Give up thoughts. That is happiness and also meditation.

D.: How are thoughts given up?

M.: The thoughts are for the thinker. Remain as the Self of the thinker and there is an end of thoughts.

Mr. Dhar asked Sri Bhagavan why Brahma, who is Perfection, creates and puts us to ordeals for regaining Him.

M.: Where is the individual who asks this question? He is in the universe and included in the creation. How does he raise the question when he is bound in the creation? He must go beyond it and see if any question arises then.

8th February, 1938

Talk 453.

Three ladies are on a short visit here, Mrs. Hearst from New Zealand, Mrs. Craig and Mrs. Allison from London.

One asked: What is the best way to work for world peace?

M.: What is world? What is peace, and who is the worker? The world is not in your sleep and forms a projection of your mind in your *jagrat*. It is therefore an idea and nothing else. Peace is absence of disturbance. The disturbance is due to the arising of thoughts in the individual, who is only the ego rising up from Pure Consciousness.

To bring about peace means to be free from thoughts and to abide as Pure Consciousness. If one remains at peace oneself, there is only peace all about.

D.: If it is a question of doing something one considers wrong, and hereby saving someone else from a great wrong, should one do it or refrain?

M.: What is right and wrong? There is no standard by which to judge something to be right and another to be wrong. Opinions differ according to the nature of the individual and according to the surroundings. They are again ideas and nothing more. Do not worry about them. But get rid of thoughts. If you always remain in the right, then right will prevail in the world.

D.: What should one think of when meditating?

M.: What is meditation? It is expulsion of thoughts. You are perturbed by thoughts which rush one after another. Hold on to one thought so that others are expelled. Continuous practice gives the necessary strength of mind to engage in meditation.

Meditation differs according to the degree of advancement of the seeker. If one is fit for it one might directly hold the thinker; and the thinker will automatically sink into his source, namely Pure Consciousness.

If one cannot directly hold the thinker one must meditate on God; and in due course the same individual will have become sufficiently pure to hold the thinker and sink into absolute Being.

One of the ladies was not satisfied with this answer and asked for further elucidation.

Sri Bhagavan then pointed out that to see wrong in another is one's own wrong. The discrimination between right and wrong is the origin of the sin. One's own sin is reflected outside and the individual in ignorance superimposes it on another. The best course for one is to reach the state in which such discrimination does not arise. Do you see wrong or right in your sleep? Did you not exist in sleep? Be asleep even in the wakeful state. Abide as the Self and remain uncontaminated by what goes on around.

Moreover, however much you might advise them, your hearers may not rectify themselves. Be in the right yourself and remain silent. Your silence will have more effect than your words or deeds. That is the development of will-power. Then the world becomes the Kingdom of Heaven, which is within you.

D.: If one is to withdraw oneself, why is there the world?

M.: Where is the world and where does one go withdrawing oneself? Does one fly in an aeroplane beyond space? Is it withdrawal?

The fact is this: the world is only an idea. What do you say: Are you within the world or is the world within you?

D.: I am in the world. I am part of it.

M.: That is the mistake. If the world were to exist apart from you, does it come and tell you that it exists? No, you see it exists. You see it when you are awake and not when asleep. If it exists apart from you, it must tell you so and you must be aware of it even in your sleep.

D.: I became aware of it in my *jagrat*.

M.: Do you become aware of yourself and then of the world? Or do you become aware of the world and then of yourself? Or do you become aware of both simultaneously?

D.: I must say simultaneously.

M.: Were you or were you not, before becoming aware of yourself? Do you admit your continued existence before and when you become aware of the world?

D.: Yes.

M.: If always existing yourself, why are you not aware of the world in sleep if it exists apart from the Self?

D.: I become aware of myself and of the world also.

M.: So you become aware of yourself. Who becomes aware of whom? Are there two selves?

D.: No.

M.: So you see that it is wrong to suppose that awareness has passing phases. The Self is always aware. When the Self identifies itself as the seer it sees objects. The creation of the subject and the object is the creation of the world. Subjects and objects are creations in Pure Consciousness. You see pictures moving on the screen in a cinema show. When you are intent on the pictures you are not aware of the screen. But the pictures cannot be seen without the screen behind. The world stands for the pictures and Consciousness stands for the screen. The Consciousness is pure. It is the same as the Self which is eternal and unchanging. Get rid of the subject and object and Pure Consciousness will alone remain.

D.: But why did Pure Brahman become *Isvara* and manifest the universe if He did not mean it?

M.: Did Brahman or *Isvara* tell you so? You say that Brahman became *Isvara*, and so on. This too you did not say in your sleep. Only in your *jagrat* state you speak of Brahman, *Isvara* and universe. The *jagrat* state is a duality of subject and object - owing to the rise of thoughts. So they are your thought creations.

D.: But the world exists in my sleep even though I am not aware.

M.: What is the proof of its existence?

D.: Others are aware of it.

M.: Do they say so to you when you are in sleep or do you become aware of others who see the world in your sleep?

D.: No, but God is always aware.

M.: Leave God alone. Speak for yourself. You do not know God. He is only what you think of Him. Is he apart from you? He is that Pure Consciousness in which all ideas are formed. You are that Consciousness.

10th February, 1938

Talk 454.

Mrs. Dhar: Sri Bhagavan advises practice of enquiry even when one is engaged in external activities. The finality of such enquiry is the realisation of the Self and consequently breath must stop. If breath should stop, how will work go on or, in other words, how will breath stop when one is working?

M.: There is confusion between the means and the end (*i.e.*, *sadhana* and *sadhya*). Who is the enquirer? The aspirant and not the *siddha*. Enquiry signifies that the enquirer considers himself separate from enquiry.

So long as this duality lasts the enquiry must be continued, *i.e.*, until the individuality disappears and the Self is realised to be only the eternal Be-ing (including enquiry and enquirer).

The Truth is that Self is constant and unintermittent Awareness. The object of enquiry is to find the true nature of the Self as Awareness. Let one practise enquiry so long as separateness is perceived.

If once realisation arises there is no further need for enquiry. The question will also not arise. Can awareness ever think of questioning who is aware? Awareness remains pure and simple.

The enquirer is aware of his own individuality. Enquiry does not stand in the way of his individual awareness; nor does external work interfere with such awareness. If work, seemingly external, does not obstruct the individual awareness, will the work, realised to be not separate from the Self, obstruct the uninterrupted Awareness of the Self, which is One without a second and which is not an individual separate from work?

Talk 455.

Mrs. Dhar: I form part of the creation and so remain dependent. I cannot solve the riddle until I become independent. Yet I ask Sri Bhagavan, should He not answer the question for me?

M.: Yes. It is Bhagavan that says, "Become independent and solve the riddle yourself. It is for you to do it." Again: where are you now that you ask this question? Are you in the world, or is the world within

you? You must admit that the world is not perceived in your sleep although you cannot deny your existence then. The world appears when you wake up. So where is it? Clearly the world is your thought. Thoughts are your projections. The 'I' is first created and then the world. The world is created by the 'I' which in its turn rises up from the Self. The riddle of the creation of the world is thus solved if you solve the creation of the 'I'. So I say, find your Self.

Again, does the world come and ask you "Why do 'I' exist? How was 'I' created?" It is you who ask the question. The questioner must establish the relationship between the world and himself. He must admit that the world is his own imagination. Who imagines it? Let him again find the 'I' and then the Self.

Moreover, all the scientific and theological explanations do not harmonise. The diversities in such theories clearly show the uselessness of seeking such explanations. Such explanations are purely mental or intellectual and nothing more. Still, all of them are true according to the standpoint of the individual. There is no creation in the state of realisation. When one sees the world, one does not see oneself. When one sees the Self, the world is not seen. So see the Self and realise that there has been no creation.

The lady being laid up is unable to go to the hall and so feels unhappy that, though near, she cannot go into the hall. This was mentioned to Sri Bhagavan. He said, "Well, thinking like this keeps her always in the Presence. This is better than remaining in the hall and thinking of something else."

11th February, 1938

Talk 456.

CONTACT WITH SAINTS

A DANGER:

"Seek the company of saints by all means; but do not remain indefinitely with them. The adage, familiarity breeds contempt, applies even to their case," writes Swami Ramdas in the course of an article in *The Vision*.

"Spiritual growth is, no doubt, largely dependent on suitable association. Company of saints is, therefore, held to be essential for a

seeker after truth. But it must not be understood by the company of saints to mean that the seeker should permanently stick on to them.

"He may, for a brief period, remain in their contact and, thereby drawing inspiration and guidance, get himself thoroughly awakened to the consciousness of the indwelling Reality. It would be well for him to depart from them before the light and inspiration that he has received diminishes or disappears.

MAY TURN SCOFFERS:

"There are many cases known to the writer and many others of which he has heard and read, in which such continued dwelling in the company of saints has not only cooled down the ardour and aspiration of the seekers but also turned them into scoffers and sceptics. The fall of a *sadhak* from faith, purity and aspiration does him incalculable harm.

"A young plant growing beneath the shade of a full-grown giant tree does not develop strength and stature. Its growth will be dwarfed, shrivelled and diseased. Whereas if the same plant were put into the open ground directly exposed to the storms, heat, cold, and other rigours of changing weather, it is bound to grow into a mighty tree drawing sustenance both from above and below.

STIFLED GROWTH:

"This analogy of the plant aptly illustrates the stunted life of a seeker who is attached merely to the outward personality of a saint and spends all his days in close association with him. Here the initiative for a free expression of his unique spiritual possibilities is stifled. He fails to cultivate the fundamental qualities for his advancement - fearlessness, self-dependence and endurance. The one great Guide that should control his mind, speech and body should be the almighty Spirit within him. To surrender to this Spirit and become its very embodiment is his goal. To stand on his own legs, struggle and grow by his own strength and experience and lastly to hand himself over to God by his own endeavour brings true liberation and peace.

"From what has been said above, it must not be construed that reflection is cast upon the greatness and efficacy of the company of God-realised

souls. Such a contact is the most effective means for a rapid spiritual evolution of the soul. In fact, the grace of saints is an invaluable aid for *sadhana* and without it the condition of the aspirant is like a bird beating in vain its wings against the bars of the cage for freedom. Saints are the saviours and liberators.

The Hindu conception of a saint is that he is the very embodiment of God himself. So honour him, derive the rare benefit of his society, serve him with a frank and pure heart, listen intently to his words of advice, and strive to act up to them and achieve the fullest knowledge of the Truth you are in quest of.

But seek not to remain attached to his person and lose the spiritual gifts you obtained from him by first contacts."

This cutting was read out to Sri Bhagavan. He listened and remained silent. He was requested to say if contact with saints could be a danger. Sri Bhagavan then quoted a Tamil stanza which says that contact with Guru should be kept up till *videhamukti* (being disembodied).

Again he asked where is the *Satpurusha*? He is within. Then he quoted another stanza meaning:

"O Master, Who has been within me in all my past incarnations and Who manifested as a human being, only to speak the language understood by me and lead me."

12th February, 1938

Talk 457.

Mrs. Rosita Forbes was said to be in India. Sri Bhagavan said: The explorers seek happiness in finding curiosities, discovering new lands and undergoing risks in adventures. They are thrilling. But where is pleasure found? Only within. Pleasure is not to be sought in the external world.

13th February, 1938

Talk 458.

Sri Bhagavan said that non-dual idea is advised, but not *advaita* in action. How will one learn *advaita*, if one does not find a master and receive instructions? Is there not duality then? That is the meaning.

14th February, 1938

Talk 459.

Quoting Alexander Selkirk's soliloquy, Sri Bhagavan said: The happiness of solitude is not found in retreats. It may be had even in busy centres. Happiness is not to be sought in solitude or in busy centres. It is in the Self.

17th February, 1938

Talk 460.

Observing the moon before the rising sun, Sri Bhagavan remarked:

See the moon and also the cloud in the sky. There is no difference in their brilliance. The moon looks only like a speck of cloud. The *jnani's* mind is like this moon before sunlight. It is there but not shining of itself.

18th February, 1938

Talk 461.

As Sri Bhagavan was going through the letters which arrived this day, He read out one of them as follows:

A Brahmin boy working in a household went to sleep as usual. In his sleep he cried out. When he woke up he said that he felt his *prana* going out of the body through the mouth and nostrils. So he cried. Soon after he found himself dead and the soul taken to *Vaikunta* where God Vishnu was surrounded by other gods and devotees with prominent Vaishnavite marks on their foreheads. Vishnu said, "This man should be brought here at 2 o'clock tomorrow. Why has he been brought here now? "The boy then woke up and related his experience. The next day at 2 o'clock he passed away.

19th February, 1938

Talk 462.

Mrs. Dhar had been anxious to ask some questions and get help from Sri Bhagavan. She approached Him with great hesitation and gently related her troubles: My attempts at concentration are frustrated by sudden palpitations of the heart and accompanying hard, short and quick breaths. Then my thoughts also rush out and the mind becomes uncontrollable. Under healthy conditions I am more successful and my breath comes to a standstill with deep concentration. I had long been anxious to get the

benefit of Sri Bhagavan's proximity for the successful culmination of my meditation and so came here after considerable effort. I fell ill here. I could not meditate and so I felt depressed. I made a determined effort to concentrate my mind even though I was troubled by short and quick breaths. Though partly successful it does not satisfy me. The time for my leaving the place is drawing near. I feel more and more depressed as I contemplate leaving the place. Here I find people obtaining peace by meditation in the hall; whereas I am not blessed with such peace. This itself has a depressing effect on me.

M.: This thought, 'I am not able to concentrate,' is itself an obstacle. Why should the thought arise?

D.: Can one remain without thoughts rising all the 24 hours of the day? Should I remain without meditation?

M.: What is 'hours' again? It is a concept. Each question of yours is prompted by a thought.

Your nature is Peace and Happiness. Thoughts are the obstacles to realisation. One's meditation or concentration is meant to get rid of obstacles and not to gain the Self. Does anyone remain apart from the Self? No! The true nature of the Self is declared to be Peace. If the same peace is not found, the non-finding is only a thought which is alien to the Self. One practises meditation only to get rid of these alien fancies. So, then, a thought must be quelled as soon as it rises. Whenever a thought arises, do not be carried away by it. You become aware of the body when you forget the Self. But can you forget the Self? Being the Self how can you forget it? There must be two selves for one to forget the other. It is absurd. So the Self is not depressed; it is not imperfect: it is ever happy. The contrary feeling is a mere thought which has actually no stamina in it. Be rid of thoughts. Why should one attempt meditation? Being the Self one remains always realised, only be free from thoughts.

You think that your health does not permit your meditation. This depression must be traced to its origin. The origin is the wrong identification of the body with the Self. The disease is not of the Self. It is of the body. But the body does not come and tell you that it is possessed by the disease. It is you who say it. Why? Because you have wrongly identified yourself with the body.

The body itself is a thought. Be as you really are. There is no reason to be depressed.

The lady was called away and she retired. The question was however pursued as follows:

D.: Sri Bhagavan's answers do not permit us to put further questions, not because our minds are peaceful but we are unable to argue the point. Our discontent is not at an end. For the physical ailments to go the mental ailments should go. Both go when thoughts go. Thoughts do not go without effort. Effort is not possible with the present weakness of mind. The mind requires grace to gain strength. Grace must manifest only after surrender. So all questions, wittingly or unwittingly, amount to asking for Sri Bhagavan's Grace.

M.: Smiled and said, "Yes."

D.: Surrender is said to be *bhakti*. But Sri Bhagavan is known to favour enquiry for the Self. There is thus confusion in the hearer.

M.: Surrender can take effect only when done with full knowledge. Such knowledge comes after enquiry. It ends in surrender.

D.: The knowledge of the Supreme Being is after transcending the individual self. This is *jnana*. Where is the need for surrender?

M.: Quite so. There is no difference between *jnana* and surrender. (Smile).

D.: How is the questioner satisfied then? The only alternative left is association with the wise or devotion to God (*satsanga* or *Isvara bhakti*).

M.: Smiled and said, "Yes."

21st February, 1938

Talk 463.

In the course of the conversation Sri Bhagavan spoke appreciatingly of the services of Palanisami and Ayyasami - his former attendants.

He said that they raised in the garden two crude platforms which were occupied by Himself and Palanisami; they were most comfortable. They were made of straw and bamboo mats and were even more comfortable than the sofa here. Palanisami used to pass through the footpath between rows of prickly pear to bring begged food every night from Kizhnathoor. Though Sri Bhagavan protested Palanisami persisted in doing so. He

was free from greed or attachment of any kind. He had earned some money by service in the Straits Settlements and deposited his small savings with someone in the town from whom he used to draw in his emergencies. He was offered a comfortable living in his native village which he refused and continued to live with Sri Bhagavan till the end.

Ayyasami had worked under a European in South Africa and was clean, active and capable. He could manage even ten asramams at a time. He was also free from any attachment or greed. He was loyal to Palanisami, even fond of him. He was more capable than the other.

Annamalai first visited Maharshi in Virupaksha cave; he later went to Kovilur and studied some Tamil scriptures. He returned to Skandasramam. He died in January, 1922 in his 29th year. In the meantime he had composed 36 stanzas in Tamil full of significance and fervour.

Sri Bhagavan had them read out and briefly explained their meaning.

5th March, 1938

Talk 464.

A passage from *Arunachala Mahatmya* (the Glory of Arunachala) was read out. It related to Pangunni (a lame sage) who had his legs made whole by the grace of Sri Arunachala. Sri Bhagavan then related the story of a man whom Sri Maharshi had seen when He was in Gurumurtham. The man was one Kuppu Iyer. His legs were useless and he could not walk. He was once on his way to Vettavalam, moving on his buttocks. An old man suddenly appeared before him and said "Get up and walk. Why do you move on your buttocks?" Kuppu Iyer was excited and beside himself. Involuntarily he rose up and walked freely. After going a short distance, he looked behind to see the stranger who made him walk. But he could not find anyone. He narrated the incident to all those who were surprised to see him walk. Any old man in the town can bear witness to Kuppu Iyer regaining the use of his legs.

Again a girl from the Girl's School was decoyed and was being robbed of her jewels. Suddenly an old man appeared on the scene, rescued the girl, escorted her to her home and then disappeared.

Often such mysterious happenings occur in Tiruvannamalai.

6th March, 1938

Talk 465.

Sri Bhagavan explained to a retired Judge of the High Court some points in the *Upadesa Saram* as follows:-

(1) Meditation should remain unbroken as a current. If unbroken it is called *samadhi or Kundalini sakti*.

(2) The mind may be latent and merge in the Self; it must necessarily rise up again; after it rises up one finds oneself only as ever before. For in this state the mental predispositions are present there in latent form to remanifest under favourable conditions.

(3) Again the mind activities can be completely destroyed. This differs from the former mind, for here the attachment is lost, never to reappear. Even though the man sees the world after he has been in the *samadhi* state, the world will be taken only at its worth, that is to say it is the phenomenon of the One Reality. The True Being can be realised only in *samadhi*; what was then is also now. Otherwise it cannot be Reality or Ever-present Being. What was in *samadhi* is here and now too. Hold it and it is your natural condition of Being. *Samadhi* practice must lead to it. Otherwise how can *nirvikalpa samadhi* be of any use in which a man remains as a log of wood? He must necessarily rise up from it sometime or other and face the world. But in *sahaja samadhi* he remains unaffected by the world.

So many pictures pass over the cinema screen: fire burns away everything; water drenches all; but the screen remains unaffected. The scenes are only phenomena which pass away leaving the screen as it was. Similarly the world phenomena simply pass on before the *Jnani*, leaving him unaffected.

You may say that people find pain or pleasure in worldly phenomena. It is owing to superimposition. This must not happen. With this end in view practice is made.

Practice lies in one of the two courses: devotion or knowledge. Even these are not the goals. *Samadhi* must be gained; it must be continuously practised until *sahaja samadhi* results. Then there remains nothing more to do.

Talk 466.

Mr. Vaidyalingam, an employee of the National Bank: By meditation manifestation disappears and then *ananda* results. It is short-lived. How is it made ever abiding?

M.: By scorching the predispositions.

D.: Is not the Self the witness only (*sakshimatra*)?

M.: 'Witness' is applicable when there is an object to be seen. Then it is duality. The Truth lies beyond both. In the mantra, *sakshi cheta kevalo nirgunascha*, the word *sakshi* must be understood as *sannidhi* (presence), without which there could be nothing. See how the sun is necessary for daily activities. He does not however form part of the world actions; yet they cannot take place without the sun. He is the witness of the activities. So it is with the Self.

7th March, 1938

Talk 467.

Yogi Ramiah: All actions take place owing to *Sakti*. How far does *Sakti* go? Can she effect anything without one's own effort?

M.: The answer to the question depends on what the *Purusha* is understood to be. Is he the ego or the Self?

D.: Purusha is *svarupa*.

M.: But he cannot make any *prayatna* (effort).

D.: Jiva is the one who makes the *prayatna*.

M.: So long as egoity lasts *prayatna* is necessary. When egoity ceases to be, actions become spontaneous. The ego acts in the presence of the Self. He cannot exist without the Self.

The Self makes the universe what it is by His *Sakti*, and yet He does not Himself act. Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "I am not the doer and yet actions go on". It is clear from the *Mahabharata* that very wonderful actions were effected by Him. Yet He says that He is not the doer. It is like the sun and the world actions.

D.: He is without *abhimana* (attachment) whereas the *jiva* is with *abhimana*.

M.: Yes. Being attached, he acts and also reaps the fruits. If the fruits are according to his desire he is happy; otherwise he is miserable. Happiness and misery are due to his attachment. If actions were to take place without attachment there would be no expectation of fruit.

D.: Can actions take place spontaneously without individual effort? Should we not cook our food in order to eat it later?

M.: Atman acts through the ego. All actions are due to efforts only. A sleeping child is fed by its mother. The child eats food without being wide awake and then denies having taken food in sleep. However the mother knows what happened. Similarly the *jnani* acts unawares. Others see him act, but he does not know it himself. Owing to fear of Him wind blows, etc. That is the order of things. He ordains everything and the universe acts accordingly, yet He does not know. Therefore He is called the great Doer. Every embodied being (*ahankari*) is bound by *niyama*. Even Brahma cannot transgress it.

[This devotee later explained the significance of his question. He hears Sri Bhagavan say that the world goes on and the individual needs are met by Divine Will. But he finds that Sri Bhagavan wakes up the Asramites at about 4 a.m. to cut vegetables for the day's curry. He wanted to have the doubt cleared for his own benefit and the question was not meant for discussion].

10th March, 1938

Talk 468.

As Sri Bhagavan was going out, the following Vedic chant was heard from a hut:

Antaraditya manasa jvalantam - *Brahmana vindat*. Sri Bhagavan drew our attention to it and remarked:-

In the *Taittriya Upanishad* also, He is said to be made of gold, etc. What does it all mean? Although the sun and the other luminaries are said to be self luminous, yet they do not shine forth of themselves but they shine by the light of the Supreme Being. (*na tatra suryo....vibhati*). So long as they are said to be separate from Brahman their 'Self-luminosity' is the luminosity of Brahman. All these *mantras* mentioning the sun, etc., speak only of Brahman.

Talk 469.

Yogi Ramiah asked: A master is approached by an aspirant for enlightenment. The master says that Brahman has no qualities, nor stain, nor movement, etc. Does he not then speak as an individual? How can the aspirant's ignorance be wiped off unless the master speaks thus? Do the words of the master as an individual amount to Truth?

M.: To whom should the master speak? Whom does he instruct? Does he see anyone different from the Self?

D.: But the disciple is asking the master for elucidation.

M.: True, but does the master see him as different? The ignorance of the disciple lies in not knowing that all are Self-realised. Can anyone exist apart from the Self? The master simply points out that the ignorance lies there and therefore does not stand apart as an individual.

What is Realisation? Is it to see God with four hands, bearing conch, wheel, club, etc.? Even if God should appear in that form, how is the disciple's ignorance wiped out? The truth must be eternal realisation. The direct perception is ever-present Experience. God Himself is known as directly perceived. It does not mean that He appears before the devotee as said above. Unless the Realisation be eternal it cannot serve any useful purpose. Can the appearance with four hands be eternal realisation? It is phenomenal and illusory. There must be a seer. The seer alone is real and eternal.

Let God appear as the light of a million suns: Is it *pratyaksha*?

To see it, the eyes, the mind, etc. are necessary. It is indirect knowledge, whereas the seer is direct experience. The seer alone is *pratyaksha*. All other perceptions are only secondary knowledge. The present superimposition of the body as 'I' is so deep-rooted, that the vision before the eyes is considered *pratyaksha* but not the seer himself. No one wants realisation because there is no one who is not realised. Can anyone say that he is not already realised or that he is apart from the Self? No. Evidently all are realised. What makes him unhappy is the desire to exercise extraordinary powers. He knows that he cannot do so. Therefore he wants God to appear before him, confer all His powers on the devotee, and keep Himself in the background. In short, God should abdicate His powers in favour of the man.

D.: It is all right for *mahatmas* like Sri Bhagavan to speak out so plainly. Because the Truth does not swerve from you, you consider it easy for all others. Nevertheless, the common folk have a real difficulty.

M.: Then does anyone say that he is not the Self?

D.: I meant to say that no one else has the courage to put things straight like Maharshi.

M.: Where is the courage in saying things as they are?

Talk 470.

As a European Countess was leaving for Europe tonight she requested him to bless her and her family.

M.: You do not go anywhere away from the Presence as you imagine. The Presence is everywhere. The body moves from place to place; yet it does not leave the one Presence. So no one can be out of sight of the Supreme Presence. Since you identify one body with Sri Bhagavan and another body with yourself, you find two separate entities and speak of going away from here. Wherever you may be, you cannot leave ME.

To illustrate it: The pictures move on the screen in a cinema show; but does the screen itself move? No. The Presence is the screen: you, I, and others are the pictures. The individuals may move but not the Self.

Talk 471.

D.: The *avatars* are said to be more glorious than the self-realised *jnanis*. *Maya* does not affect them from birth; divine powers are manifest; new religions are started; and so on.

M.: (1) "*Jnani tvatmaiva me matam*."

(2) "*Sarvam khalvidam brahma*."

How is an *avatar* different from a *jnani*; or how can there be an *avatar* as distinct from the universe?

D.: The eye (*chakshu*) is said to be the repository (*ayatana*) of all forms; so the ear (*srotra*) is of all sounds, etc. The one *Chaitanya* operates as all; no miracles are possible without the aid of the

senses (*indriyas*). How can there be miracles at all? If they are said to surpass human understanding so are the creations in dreams. Where then is the miracle?

The distinction between *Avataras* and *Jnanis* is absurd.

"Knower of Brahman becomes Brahman only" is otherwise contradicted.

M.: Quite so.

15th March, 1938

Talk 472.

A large group of Punjabis arrived here in a pilgrim special. They came to the Ramanasramam at about 8-45 a.m. and sat quiet for a long time. At about 9-20 one of them said: "Your reputation has spread in the Punjab. We have travelled a long distance to have your *darsan*. Kindly tell us something by way of instruction." There was no oral reply. Sri Bhagavan smiled and gazed on. After some time the visitor asked: "Which is the best - the yoga, the *bhakti* or the *jnana* path?" Still Sri Bhagavan smiled and gazed as before.

Sri Bhagavan left the hall for a few minutes. The visitors began to disperse. Still a sprinkling of them continued to sit in the hall. A long standing disciple told the visitor that Sri Bhagavan had replied to his questions by His Silence which was even more eloquent than words.

After Sri Bhagavan returned, the visitor began to speak a little. In the course of his speech, he asked:

D.: It is all right for those who believe in God. Others ask - Is there a God?

M.: Are you there?

D.: Quite so. That is the question. I see before my eyes a battalion of sepoys passing. Therefore I am. The world must have been created by God. How shall I see the Creator?

M.: See yourself, who sees these, and the problem is solved.

D.: Is it to sit silent or to read sacred books or to concentrate the mind? *Bhakti* helps concentration. People fall at the feet of the *bhakta*. If it does not happen he feels disappointed and his *bhakti* fades.

M.: The longing for happiness never fades. That is *bhakti*.

D.: How shall I get it quicker? Suppose I concentrate two hours today. If I try to lengthen the period the next day, I fall asleep because I get tired of the job.

M.: You do not get tired in sleep. The same person is now present here. Why should you be tired now? Because your mind is restless and wanders, it gets tired, and not you.

D.: I am a business man. How shall I get on with business and get peace of mind also?

M.: This is also a thought. Give up this thought also and remain as your true Self.

D.: It is said: Do your duty without any expectation of results. How shall I get that frame of mind?

M.: You need not aspire for or get any new state. Get rid of your present thoughts, that is all.

D.: How shall I get the *bhakti* necessary for it?

M.: It is *bhakti* to get rid of thoughts which are only alien to you (*i.e.* the Self).

D.: What is thought-force, mesmerism, etc.? There was a doctor in Paris called Dr. Coue. He was illiterate, but yet was able to cure many incurable diseases by will-force. He used to say: Generate power to cure yourself. The power is within you.

M.: It is through the same will-power that the seat of all diseases, the body, has risen.

D.: So it is said thoughts manifest as objects.

M.: This thought must be for *mukti* (liberation).

D.: God must enable us to get rid of the other thoughts.

M.: This is again a thought. Let that which has incarnated raise the question. You are not that because you are free from thoughts.

Another visitor from Rawalpindi asked: The Atman is formless. How shall I concentrate on it?

M.: Leave alone the Atman which you say is formless or intangible. Mind is tangible to you. Hold the mind and it will do.

D.: Mind itself is very subtle and is also the same as the Atman. How shall we know the nature of the mind? You have said that all supports are useless. What should be our stand then?

M.: Where does your mind stand?

D.: Where does it stand?

M.: Ask the mind itself.

D.: I ask you now. Should we concentrate on mind then?

M.: Um!

D.: But what is the nature of the mind? It is formless. The problem is perplexing.

M.: Why are you perplexed?

D.: The *sastras* want us to concentrate and I cannot do so.

M.: Through what *sastras* have we known our existence?

D.: It is a matter of experience. But I want to concentrate.

M.: Be free from thoughts. Do not hold on to anything. They do not hold you. Be yourself.

D.: I do not yet understand as to where I take my stand and concentrate. Can I meditate on my mind?

M.: Whose mind?

D.: My own mind?

M.: Who are you? The question now resolves itself all right.

(All retired for lunch. The visitor returned at 2-30 p.m. and pursued the same question.)

He said: Maharshi advises the seeker to get rid of thoughts. On what should I concentrate the mind after all the thoughts are expelled? I do not see where I stand then and on what I should concentrate.

M.: For whom is the concentration?

D.: For the mind.

M.: Then concentrate the mind.

D.: On what?

M.: Answer the question yourself. What is the mind? Why should you concentrate?

D.: I do not know what the mind is. I ask Maharshi.

M.: Maharshi does not seek to know the mind. The questioner must question the mind itself as to what it is.

D.: Maharshi advises that the mind should be divested of thoughts.

M.: This is itself a thought.

D.: When all thoughts disappear what remains over?

M.: Is the mind different from thoughts?

D.: No. The mind is made up of thoughts. My point is this: When all thoughts are got rid of, how shall I concentrate the mind?

M.: Is not this also a thought?

D.: Yes, but I am advised to concentrate.

M.: Why should you concentrate? Why should you not allow your thoughts free play?

D.: The *sastras* say that the thoughts, thus playing free, lead us astray, that is, to unreal and changeful things.

M.: So then, you want not to be led to unreal and changeful things. Your thoughts are unreal and changeful. You want to hold the Reality. That is exactly what I say. The thoughts are unreal. Get rid of them.

D.: I understand now. Yet there is a doubt. "Not a trice can you remain inactive." How shall I be able to rid myself of thoughts?

M.: The same *Gita* says: "Although all actions take place, I am not the doer." It is like the sun towards the world activities. The Self always remains actionless, whereas thoughts arise and subside. The Self is Perfection; it is immutable; the mind is limited and changeful. You need only to cast off your limitations. Your perfection thus stands revealed.

D.: Grace is necessary for it.

M.: Grace is ever present. All that is necessary is that you surrender to It.

D.: I surrender and pray that even if I go wrong I may be forcibly drawn to it.

M.: Is this surrender? Surrender to be complete must be unquestioning.

D.: Yes, I surrender. You say I must dive into the ocean of the Self like a pearl-diver into the sea.

M.: Because you are now thinking that you are out of the ocean of Consciousness.

D.: I practise *pranayama*. It generates heat in the body. What should I do?

M.: The heat will pass away when the mind gains calm

D.: That is true but most difficult.

M.: This is again a thought which is an obstacle.

Talk 473.

Someone remarked: It is said that they get *mukti* unasked who live or die within a radius of 30 miles round Arunachala. It is also admitted that only by *jnana* is liberation obtained. The *purana* also remarks that *Vedanta Vijnana* is difficult to get. So *mukti* is difficult. But life or death round about the Hill bestows *mukti* so easily. How can it be?

M.: Siva says, "By My command." Those who live here need no initiation, *diksha*, etc., but get *mukti*.. Such is the command of Siva.

D.: The *purana* also says that those who are born here are Siva's group of followers, such as ghosts, spirits, disembodied beings, etc.

M.: So it is said of other *kshetras* as well, *e.g.*, Tiruvarur, Chidambaram.

D.: How does mere life or death here confer *mukti*? It is difficult to understand.

M.: Darsanad Abhrasadasi jananat Kamalalaye, Kasyantu maranam muktih smaranad Arunachale.

"To see Chidambaram, to be born in Tiruvarur, to die in Benares, or merely to think of Arunachala, is to be assured of Liberation."

Jananat Kamalalaye means "by being born in *Kamalalaya*". What is it? It is the Heart.

Similarly, *Abhrasadasi* - Seat of Consciousness. Again, *Kasi* is the Light of Realisation. Remembering Arunachala completes the verse. It must also be understood in the same sense.

D.: So *bhakti* is necessary.

M.: Everything depends on the outlook. One sees that all born in Tiruvarur, or visiting Chidambaram, or dying in Banares, or contemplating Arunachala, are *muktas*.

D.: I think of Arunachala, but still I am not a *mukta*.

M.: Change of outlook is all that is necessary. See what such a change did for Arjuna. He had the vision, of the Cosmic Self. Sri Krishna says: "Gods and saints are eager to see my Cosmic Form. I have not fulfilled their desire. Yet I endow divine sight by which you can see that Form." Well, having said so, does He show what He is? No. He asks Arjuna to see in Him all that he desires to see. If that were His real form it must be changeless and known for what it is worth. Instead, Arjuna is commanded to see whatever he desires. So where is the Cosmic Form? It must be in Arjuna.

Furthermore, Arjuna finds Gods and saints in that form and they are praising the Lord. If the form be withheld from the Gods and saints as said by Krishna, who are they of Arjuna's vision?

D.: They must be in his imagination.

M.: They are there because of Arjuna's outlook.

D.: Then the outlook must be changed by God's Grace.

M.: Yes. That happens to *bhaktas*.

D.: A man dreams of a tiger, takes fright and wakes up. The dream-tiger appears to the dream ego who is also frightened. When he wakes up how is it that that ego disappears, and the man wakes up as the waking ego?

M.: That establishes that the ego is the same. Dream, wakefulness and sleep are passing phases for the same ego.

D.: It is so difficult to spot the mind. The same difficulty is shared by all.

M.: You can never find the mind through mind. Pass beyond it in order to find it non-existent.

D.: Then one must directly go to seek the ego. Is it so?

M.: That's it.

Mind, ego, intellect are all different names for one single inner organ (*antahkarana*). The mind is only the aggregate of thoughts. Thoughts cannot exist but for the ego. So all thoughts are pervaded by ego (*aham*). Seek wherefrom the 'I' rises and the other thoughts will disappear.

D.: What remains over cannot be 'I', but Pure Consciousness.

M.: Quite so. You start seeking happiness. On analysis you find that misery is caused by thoughts. They are called the mind. While trying to control the mind you seek the 'I' and get fixed in Being-Knowledge-Bliss.

Another devotee: What then is the mind?

M.: Mind is consciousness which has put on limitations. You are originally unlimited and perfect. Later you take on limitations and become the mind.

D.: It is *avarana* (veiling) then. How does this happen?

M.: To whom is the *avarana*? It is the same as *avidya* (ignorance), ego or the mind.

D.: Avarana means obscuration. Who is obscured? How does it arise?

M.: The limitation is itself obscuration. No questions will arise if limitations are transcended.

16th March, 1938

Talk 474.

There was some reference to the heart. Sri Bhagavan said: The yoga *sastras* speak of 72,000 *nadis,* of 101 *nadis,* etc. A reconciliation is effected by others that 101 are the main *nadis,* which subdivide into 72,*000.* These *nadis* are supposed by some to spread out from the brain, by others from the Heart and by some others from the coccyx. They speak of a *paranadi* which is said to rise up from the coccyx through the *Sushumna* to the brain and descends to the heart. Others say that the *Sushumna* ends in *Para*.

A few advise seeking realisation in the head (*Sahasrara*); a few between the eyebrows; a few in the heart; others in the solar plexus. If realisation amounts to gaining the *Paranadi,* one might enter it from the Heart. But the yogi is engaged in cleansing the *nadis*; then *Kundalini* is awakened which is said to rise up from the coccyx to the head. The yogi is later advised to come down to the Heart as the final step.

The Vedas say: "The Heart is like a lotus turned down, or a plantain bud."

“There is a bright spot atom-like, like the end of a grain of paddy.”

“That spot is like a flame and in its centre, transcendental Brahman is seated.” Which is that Heart? Is it the heart of the physiologists? If so, the physiologists know best.

The Heart of the Upanishads is construed as *Hridayam*, meaning: This (is) the centre. That is, it is where the mind rises and subsides. That is the seat of Realisation. When I say that it is the Self the people imagine that it is within the body. When I ask where the Self remains in one’s sleep they seem to think that it is within the body, but unaware of the body and its surroundings like a man confined in a dark room. To such people it is necessary to say that the seat of Realisation is somewhere within the body. The name of the centre is the Heart; but it is confounded with the heart organ.

When a man dreams, he creates himself (*i.e.*, the *ahamkar*, the seer) and the surroundings. All of them are later withdrawn into himself. The one became many, along with the seer. Similarly also, the one becomes many in the waking state. The objective world is really subjective. An astronomer discovers a new star at immeasurable distance and announces that its light takes thousands of light years to reach the earth. Well, where is the star in fact? Is it not in the observer? But people wonder how a huge globe, larger than the Sun, at such a distance can be contained in the brain-cells of a man. The space, the magnitudes and the paradox are all in the mind only. How do they exist there? Inasmuch as you become aware of them, you must admit a light which illumines them. These thoughts are absent in sleep but rise up on waking. So this light is transient, having an origin and an end. The consciousness of ‘I’ is permanent and continuous. So this cannot be the aforesaid light. It is different but has no independent existence. Therefore it must be *abhasa* (reflected light). The light in the brain is thus reflected knowledge (*abhasa samvit*) or reflected being (*abhasa sat*). The true knowledge (*Samvit*) or Being (*Sat*) is in the centre called Heart (*Hridaya*). When one wakes up from sleep it is reflected in the head, and so the head is no longer lying prone but rises up. From there the consciousness spreads all over the body and so the superimposed ‘I’ functions as the wakeful entity.

The pure light in the brain is *suddha manas* (the pure mind) which later becomes contaminated and is *malina manas*, the one ordinarily found.

All these are however contained in the Self. The body and its counterparts are in the Self. The Self is not confined in the body, as is commonly supposed.

16th March, 1938

Talk 475.

Sri Maharshi read out a news item from a paper to the following effect: A forest guard armed with a rifle was going in the jungle and noticed two bright spots in a thicket. On closer approach to find out what they were, he was face to face with a huge tiger within a few yards of him. He threw down his gun and assumed a prayerful attitude towards the jungle king. The tiger stood up and slowly moved away without injuring him.

21st March, 1938

Talk 476.

Dr. Stanley Jones, a Christian missionary, visited Maharshi. He writes books and delivers lectures. He has two Asramams under his control in North India. He was accompanied by another gentleman and two ladies. He is at present writing a book *On the Indian Road* and wants to meet the spiritually great men in India so that he may collect material for the book. He desired to know how the Indian sages have proceeded and what they have found as their experience in divinity. So he asked questions. (This is only a short sketch of his interview).

D.: What is your quest? What is the goal? How far have you progressed?

M.: The goal is the same for all. But tell me why you should be in search of a goal? Why are you not content with the present condition?

D.: Is there then no goal?

M.: Not so. What makes you seek a goal? It is a counter-question to be answered by you.

D.: I have my own ideas of these subjects. I want to know what Maharshi has to say.

M.: Maharshi has no doubts to be cleared.

D.: Well, I consider the goal to be the realisation by the lower mind of the higher mind so that the Kingdom of Heaven might endure here on earth. The lower mind is incomplete and it must be made perfect by realisation of the higher mind.

M.: So then you admit a lower mind which is incomplete and which seeks realisation of the higher so that it may become perfect. Is that lower mind apart from the higher mind? Is it independent of the other?

D.: The Kingdom of Heaven was brought down on Earth by Jesus Christ. I consider Him to be the Kingdom personified. I want everyone to realise the same. He said: "I am hungry with other men's hunger;" and so on. Mutual partnership in pleasure and pain is the Kingdom of Heaven. If that Kingdom is universalised everyone will feel at one with the rest.

M.: You speak of the differences between the lower and the higher minds, pleasures and pains. What becomes of these differences in your sleep?

D.: But I want to be wide awake.

M.: Is this your wide awakened state? It is not. It is only a dream in your long sleep. All are in sleep, dreaming of the world and things and actions.

D.: This is all Vedantic, I have no use for it. The existing differences are not imaginary. They are positive. However, what is that real waking? Can Maharshi tell us what he has found it to be?

M.: Real waking lies beyond the three states of waking, dream and sleep.

D.: I am really awake and know that I am not in sleep.

M.: Real waking lies beyond the plane of differences.

D.: What is the state of the world then?

M.: Does the world come and tell you "I exist"?

D.: No. But the people in the world tell me that the world needs spiritual, social and moral regeneration.

M.: You see the world and the people in it. They are your thoughts. Can the world be apart from you?

D.: I enter into it with love.

M.: Before entering thus do you stand aloof?

D.: I am identified with it and yet remaining apart. Now I came here to ask Maharshi and hear him. Why does he ask me questions?

M.: Maharshi has replied. His reply amounts to this: Real waking does not involve differences.

D.: Can such realisation be universalised?

M.: Where are differences there? There are no individuals in it.

D.: Have you reached the goal?

M.: The goal cannot be anything apart from the Self nor can it be something to be gained afresh. If that were so, such goal cannot be abiding and permanent. What appears anew will also disappear. The goal must be eternal and within. Find it within yourself.

D.: I want to know your experience.

M.: Maharshi does not seek enlightenment. The question is of no use to the questioner. Whether I have realised or not, how does it affect the questioner?

D.: Not so. Each one's experience has a human value in it and can be shared by others.

M.: The problem must be solved by the questioner himself. The question is best directed to oneself.

D.: I know the answer to the question.

M.: Let us have it.

D.: I was shown the Kingdom of Heaven twenty years ago. It was by God's grace only. I made no effort for it. I was happy. I want to universalise, moralise and socialise it. At the same time I want to know Maharshi's experience of the Divine.

Mrs. Jinarajadasa intervened and spoke softly: We all agree that Maharshi has brought the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Why do you press him to answer your questions relating to his realisation? It is for you to seek and gain it.

The questioner listened to her, argued slightly and resumed his questions to Maharshi. After one or two light questions, Major Chadwick spoke sternly: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," says the *Bible*.

D.: How shall I realise it?

Major Chadwick: Why do you ask Maharshi to realise it for you?

D.: I do not.

Major Chadwick: The Kingdom is within you. You should realise it.

D.: It is *within* only for those who hear it.

Major Chadwick: The *Bible* says *within you*, and adds no qualifications.

The questioner felt his conversation was already too long and so retired after thanking Maharshi and others.

Talk 477.

Mrs. Jinarajadasa: How shall we be able to remember the truth experienced in dreams?

M.: Your present waking state, your dreams and your desire to remember are all thoughts. They arise only after the mind has arisen. Were you not existing in the absence of the mind?

D.: Yes, I was.

M.: The fact of your existence is also your realisation

D.: I understand it intellectually. The truth is felt in temporary flashes only. It is not abiding.

M.: Such thoughts smother up the state of your eternal realisation.

D.: The rough and tumble of town life is not congenial to realisation. Jungle retreats afford the necessary quiet and solitude.

M.: One can be free in a town and may yet be bound in jungle retreats. It is all in the mind.

D.: The mind again is *maya*, I suppose.

M.: What is *maya*? The knowledge that the mind is divorced from the Reality is *maya*. The mind is in Reality only and not apart. This knowledge is the elimination of *maya*.

Further conversation led to the question if the mind was identical with the brain. Sri Bhagavan said: The mind is only a force operating on the brain. You are now here and awake. The thoughts of the world and the surroundings are in the brain within the body. When you dream you create another self who sees the world of dream creation and the surroundings just as you do now. The dream visions are in the dream

brain which is again in the dream body. That is different from your present body. You remember the dream now. The brains are however different. Yet the visions appear in the mind. The mind therefore is not identical with the brain. Waking, dream and sleep are for the mind only.

D.: The understanding is intellectual.

M.: Intellect. Whose intellect? The problem revolves round that question.

You admit that you exist even in the absence of intellect - say, in sleep. How do you know that you exist if you have not realised your existence? Your very existence is realisation. You cannot imagine a point of time when you do not exist. So there is no period of time when realisation is not.

22nd March, 1938

Talk 478.

A certain man from Madurai asked: How to know the Power of God?

M.: You say 'I AM'. That is it. What else can say I AM?

One's own being is His Power. The trouble arises only when one says, "I am this or that, such and such." Do not do it - Be yourself. That is all.

D.: How to experience Bliss?

M.: To be free from thinking "I am now out of Bliss".

D.: That is to say free from modes of mind.

M.: To be with only one mode of mind to the exclusion of others.

D.: But Bliss must be experienced.

M.: Bliss consists in not forgetting your being. How can you be otherwise than what you really are? It is also to be the Seat of Love. Love is Bliss. Here the Seat is not different from Love.

D.: How shall I be all-pervading?

M.: Give up the thought, "I am not all-pervading now."

D.: How to permeate the separate objects?

M.: Do they exist independently of "I"? Do they say to you "We are"? You see them. You are, and then the objects are also seen. "Without me, these do not exist" - this knowledge is permeation. Owing to the idea "I am the body; there is something in me" the

separate objects are seen as if lying outside. Know that they are all within yourself. Is a piece of cloth independent of yarn? Can the objects remain without Me?

Talk 479.

D.: Which is the best of all the religions? What is Sri Bhagavan's method?

M.: All religions and methods are one and the same.

D.: Different methods are taught for liberation.

M.: Why should you be liberated? Why not remain as you are now?

D.: I want to get rid of pain. To be rid of it is said to be liberation.

M.: That is what all religions teach.

D.: But what is the method?

M.: To retrace your way back.

D.: Whence have I come?

M.: That is just what you should know. Did these questions arise in your sleep? Did you not exist then? Are you not the same being now?

D.: Yes, I *was* in sleep; so also the mind; but the senses had merged, so I could not speak.

M.: Are you *jiva*? Are you the mind? Did the mind announce itself to you in sleep?

D.: No. But elders say that the *jiva* is different from *Isvara*.

M.: Leave *Isvara* alone. Speak for yourself.

D.: What about myself? Who am I?

M.: That is just it. Know it, when all will be known; if not, ask then.

D.: On waking I see the world and I am not changed from sleep.

M.: But this is not known in sleep. Now or then, the same you remain. Who has changed now? Is your nature to be changing or remain unchanging?

D.: What is the proof?

M.: Does one's own being require a proof? Only remain aware of your own self, all else will be known.

D.: Why then do the dualists and non-dualists quarrel among themselves?

M.: If each one minds his own business, there will be no quarrel.

Talk 480.

A European lady, Mrs. Gasque, gave a slip of paper on which was written: We are thankful to Nature and the Infinite Intelligence for your Presence among us. We appreciate that your Wisdom is founded upon pure Truth and the basic principle of Life and Eternity. We are happy that you remind us to "Be still and Know THAT".

What do you consider the future of this Earth?

Answer: The answer to this question is contained in the other sheet. *Be still and know that* I AM GOD.

"Stillness" here means "Being free from thoughts".

D.: This does not answer the question. The planet has a future - what is it to be?

M.: Time and space are functions of thoughts. If thoughts do not arise there will be no future or the Earth.

D.: Time and space will remain even if we do not think of them.

M.: Do they come and tell you that they are? Do you feel them in your sleep?

D.: I was not conscious in my sleep.

M.: And yet you were existing in your sleep.

D.: I was not in my body. I had gone out somewhere and jumped in here just before waking up.

M.: Your having been away in sleep and jumping in now are mere ideas. Where were you in sleep? You were only what you are, but with this difference that you were free from thoughts in sleep.

D.: Wars are going on in the world. If we do not think, do the wars cease?

M.: Can you stop the wars? He who made the world will take care of it.

D.: God made the world and He is not responsible for the present condition of the world. It is we who are responsible for the present state.

M.: Can you stop the wars or reform the world?

D.: No.

M.: Then why do you worry yourself about what is not possible for you? Take care of yourself and the world will take care of itself.

D.: We are pacifists. We want to bring about Peace.

M.: Peace is always present. Get rid of the disturbances to Peace. This Peace is the Self.

The thoughts are the disturbances. When free from them, you are Infinite Intelligence, *i.e.*, the Self. There is Perfection and Peace.

D.: The world must have a future.

M.: Do you know what it is in the present? The world and all together are the same, now as well as in the future.

D.: The world was made by the operation of Intelligence on ether and atoms.

M.: All of them are reduced to *Isvara* and *Sakti*. You are not now apart from Them. They and you are one and the same Intelligence.

After a few minutes one lady asked: "Do you ever intend to go to America?"

M.: America is just where India is (*i.e.*, in the plane of thought).

Another (Spanish) lady: They say that there is a shrine in the Himalayas entering which one gets some strange vibrations which heal all diseases. Is it possible?

M.: They speak of some shrine in Nepal and also in other parts of the Himalayas where the people are said to become unconscious on entering them.

Talk 481.

Muruganar asked what *prajnana* is.

M.: Prajnana (Absolute Knowledge) is that from which *vijnana* (relative knowledge) proceeds.

D.: In the state of *vijnana* one becomes aware of the *samvit* (cosmic intelligence). But is that *suddha samvit* aware by itself without the aid of *antahkaranas* (inner organs)?

M.: It is so, even logically.

D.: Becoming aware of *samvit* in *jagrat* by *vijnana*, *prajnana* is not found self-shining. If so, it must be found in sleep.

M.: The awareness is at present through *antahkaranas*. *Prajnana* is always shining even in sleep. If one is continuously aware in *jagrat* the awareness will continue in sleep also.

Moreover, it is illustrated thus: A king comes into the hall, sits there and then leaves the place.

He did not go into the kitchen. Can one in the kitchen for that reason say, “The king did not come here”? When awareness is found in *jagrat* it must also be in sleep.

29th April, 1938

Talk 482.

Dr. Pande of Indore is on a visit here. He asked leave of Bhagavan to ask questions so that his doubts might be cleared. He wanted to be shown a practical way to realise the Self.

M.: A man was blindfolded and left in the woods. He then enquired of the way to Gandhara from each one he met on the way until he finally reached it. So also all the ways lead to Self-Realisation. They are aids to the common goal.

D.: Dhyana will be easy if there is a *pratikam* (symbol). But the enquiry into the Self does not show any *pratikam*.

M.: You admit the existence of the Self. Do you point to the *pratikam* (symbol) and say that it is the Self? Maybe you think the body is the Self. But consider your deep sleep. You do exist then. What is the *pratikam* there? So the Self can be realised without *pratikam*.

D.: Quite true. I see the force of the words. But yet are not *mantras*, etc., helpful?

M.: They are helpful. What is *mantra*? You are thinking of the simple sounds of the *mantra*. Repetition of the same excludes all other thoughts. The single thought of the *mantra japa* remains. That too drops away giving place to the Infinite Self, which is the *mantra* itself.

Mantra, dhyana, bhakti, etc., are all aids and finally lead to *Swarupa*, the Self, which is they themselves.

After a few minutes Maharshi continued:

Everyone is the Self, indeed infinite. Yet each one mistakes the body for the Self. To know anything, illumination is necessary. Such illuminating agency can only be in the form of light which is

however lighting the physical light and darkness. So then that other Light lies beyond the apparent light and darkness. It is itself neither light nor darkness but is said to be Light because It illumines both. It is also Infinite and remains as Consciousness. Consciousness is the Self of which everyone is aware. No one is away from the Self. So each one is Self-realised. Yet what a mystery that no one knows this fundamental fact, and desires to realise the Self?

This ignorance is due to the mistaking of the body for the Self. Realisation now consists in getting rid of this false idea that one is not realised. Realisation is not anything newly got. It must be already there in order that it may be permanent. Otherwise Realisation is not worth attempting.

After the false notion 'I-am-the-body' or 'I have not realised' is removed, Supreme Consciousness or the Self alone is left over, which is however called Realisation in the present state of knowledge. However, the truth is that Realisation is eternal and already there, here and now.

Finally, Realisation amounts to elimination of ignorance and nothing more or less.

D.: My profession requires my stay in my place. I cannot remain in the vicinity of *sadhus*. Can I have realisation even in the absence of *sat sanga* as necessitated by my circumstances?

M.: Sat is aham pratyaya saram = the Self of selves. The *sadhu* is that Self of selves. He is immanent in all. Can anyone remain without the Self? No. So no one is away from *sat sanga*.

30th April, 1938

Talk 483.

Mr. Sitaramiah, a visitor: What does *samyamana* mean in Patanjali Yoga Sutra?

M.: One-pointedness of mind.

D.: By such *samyamana* in the Heart, *chitta samvit* is said to result. What does it mean?

M.: Chitta samvit is *Atma jnana i.e.*, Knowledge of the Self.

Talk 484.

D.: I think that celibacy and initiation are prerequisites even for a householder in order that he may succeed in self-investigation. Am I right? Or can a householder observe celibacy and seek initiation from a master on occasions only?

M.: First ascertain who the wife and the husband are. Then these questions will not arise.

D.: Engaged in other pursuits, can the mental activities be checked and the query "Who am I?" pursued? Are they not contrary to each other?

M.: These questions arise only in the absence of strength of mind. As the mental activities diminish its strength increases.

D.: Does the Karma theory mean that the world is the result of action and reaction? If so, action and reaction of what?

M.: Until realisation there will be Karma, *i.e.*, action and reaction; after realisation there will be no Karma, no world.

Talk 485 .

D.: While engaged in *Atma vichara* (the investigation of the Self), I fall asleep. What is the remedy for it?

M.: Do *nama-sankirtana* (sing the name of God).

D.: It is ruled out in sleep.

M.: True. The practice should be continued while awake. Directly you wake up from sleep, you must resume it. The sleeper does not care for *Atma vichara*. So he need not practise anything. The waking self desires it and so he must do it.

In the course of conversation Sri Bhagavan continued: The mind is something mysterious. It consists of *satva, rajas* and *tamas*. The latter two give rise to *vikshepa*. In the *satva* aspect, it remains pure and uncontaminated. So there are no thoughts there and it is identical with the Self. The mind is like *akasa* (ether). Just as there are the objects in the *akasa*, so there are thoughts in the mind. The *akasa* is the counterpart of the mind and objects are of thought. One cannot hope to measure the universe and study the phenomena. It is impossible. For the objects are mental creations. To measure them is similar to trying to stamp with one's foot on the head of the shadow

cast by oneself. The farther one moves the farther the shadow does also. So one cannot plant one's foot on the head of the shadow. (Here Sri Bhagavan related several incidents connected with shadows including the pranks of monkeys and a mirror). A child sees his own shadow and tries to hold the head of the shadow. As he bends and puts out his arm the head moves further. The child struggles more and more. The mother, seeing the struggle, pities the young one. So she takes hold of the young hand and keeps it on his own head and tells the child to observe the head of the shadow caught in the hand. Similarly with the ignorant practiser to study the universe. The universe is only an object created by the mind and has its being in the mind. It cannot be measured as an exterior entity. One must reach the Self in order to reach the universe.

Again people often ask how the mind is controlled. I say to them, "Show me the mind and then you will know what to do." The fact is that the mind is only a bundle of thoughts. How can you extinguish it by the thought of doing so or by a desire? Your thoughts and desires are part and parcel of the mind. The mind is simply fattened by new thoughts rising up. Therefore it is foolish to attempt to kill the mind by means of the mind. The only way of doing it is to find its source and hold on to it. The mind will then fade away of its own accord. Yoga teaches *chitta vritti nirodha* (control of the activities of the mind). But I say *Atma vichara* (Self-investigation). This is the practical way. *Chitta vritti nirodha* is brought about in sleep, swoon or by starvation. As soon as the cause is withdrawn there is recrudescence of thoughts. Of what use is it then? In the state of stupor there is peace and no misery. But misery recurs when the stupor is removed. So *nirodha* (control) is useless and cannot be of lasting benefit.

How then can the benefit be made lasting? It is by finding the cause of misery. Misery is due to objects. If they are not there, there will be no contingent thoughts and so misery is wiped off. "How will objects cease to be?" is the next question. The *shrutis* and the sages say that the objects are only mental creations. They have no substantive being. Investigate the matter and ascertain the truth of the statement. The result will be the conclusion that the objective world is in the subjective consciousness. The Self is thus the only Reality which permeates and also envelops the world. Since there is

no duality, no thoughts will arise to disturb your peace. This is Realisation of the Self. The Self is eternal and so also its Realisation.

In the course of the discourse Sri Bhagavan also made a few points clearer:

Abhyasa consists in withdrawal within the Self every time you are disturbed by thought. It is not concentration or destruction of the mind but withdrawal into the Self.

Dhyana, bhakti, japa, etc., are aids to keep out the multiplicity of thoughts. A single thought prevails which too eventually dissolves in the Self.

The questioner quoted that the mind starved of ideas amounted to realisation and asked what the experience is in that state. He himself read out a passage from Mr. Brunton that it was indescribable. The answer was there. He again ventured out that it must be like looking through an unsilvered mirror, as contrasted with the present experience corresponding to looking on a silvered mirror.

Sri Bhagavan said it was a mirror facing another clear mirror, *i.e.*, no reflection.

2nd May, 1938

Talk 486.

Mr. Ganapatram: How shall I find out "Who am I"?

M.: Are there two selves for the one self to find the other?

D.: The Self must be only one consisting of two aspects of 'I' and *sankalpa* (*i.e.*, of thinker and thought).

After a time he continued: Please say how I shall realise the 'I'. Am I to make the *japa*, "Who am I?"

M.: No *japa* of the kind is meant.

D.: Am I to think "Who am I"?

M.: You have known that the 'I-thought' springs forth. Hold the 'I-thought' and find its *moola* (source).

D.: May I know the way?

M.: Do as you have now been told and see.

D.: I do not understand what I should do.

M.: If it is anything objective the way can be shown objectively. This is subjective.

D.: But I do not understand.

M.: What! Do you not understand that you are?

D.: Please tell me the way.

M.: Is it necessary to show the way in the interior of your own home? This is within you.

D.: What do you advise me to do?

M.: Why should you do anything and what should you do? Only keep quiet. Why not do so? Each one must do according to his own state.

D.: Please tell me what is suitable to me. I want to hear from you.

(No answer.)

Talk 487.

An English lady, a young woman, came here dressed in a Muslim sari. She had evidently been in North India and met Dr. G. H. Mees.

Sri Bhagavan read out a stanza "The Black Sun" from the anniversary number of *The Vision*, written by Swami Bharatananda.

After a few minutes, Miss J. asked: One gathers from the stanza that one should keep on meditating until one gets merged in the state of consciousness. Do you think it right?

M.: Yes.

D.: I go further and ask: Is it right that one should, by conscious will, go into that state from which there is no return?

(No answer) - Dinner bell.

Afternoon

D.: What is the object of Self-Realisation?

M.: Self-Realisation is the final goal and it is the end in itself.

D.: l mean, what is the use of Self-Realisation?

M.: Why should you seek Self-Realisation? Why do you not rest content with your present state? It is evident that you are discontented with the present state. The discontent is at an end if you realise the Self.

D.: What is that Self-Realisation which removes the discontent? I am in the world and there are wars in it. Can Self-Realisation put an end to it?

M.: Are you in the world? Or is the world in you?

D.: I do not understand. The world is certainly around me.

M.: You speak of the world and happenings in it. They are mere ideas in you. The ideas are in the mind. The mind is within you. And so the world is within you.

D.: I do not follow you. Even if I do not think of the world, the world is still there.

M.: Do you mean to say that the world is apart from the mind and it can exist in the absence of the mind?

D.: Yes.

M.: Does the world exist in your deep sleep?

D.: It does.

M.: Do you see it in your sleep?

D.: No, I don't. But others, who are awake, see it.

M.: Are you so aware in your sleep? Or do you become aware of the other's knowledge now?

D.: In my waking state.

M.: So you speak of waking knowledge and not of sleep-experience. The existence of the world in your waking and dream states is admitted because they are the products of the mind. The mind is withdrawn in sleep and the world is in the condition of a seed. It becomes manifest over again when you wake up. The ego springs forth, identifies itself with the body and sees the world. So the world is a mental creation.

D.: How can it be?

M.: Do you not create a world in your dream? The waking state also is a long drawn out dream. There must be a seer behind the waking and dream experiences. Who is that seer? Is it the body?

D.: It cannot be.

M.: Is it the mind?

D.: It must be so.

M.: But you remain in the absence of the mind.

D.: How?

M.: In deep sleep.

D.: l do not know if I am then.

M.: If you were not how do you recollect yesterday's experiences? Is it possible that there was a break in the continuity of the 'I' during sleep?

D.: It may be.

M.: If so, a Johnson may wake up as a Benson. How will the identity of the individual be established?

D.: I don't know.

M.: If this argument is not clear, follow a different line. You admit "I slept well", "I feel refreshed after a sound sleep". So sleep was your experience. The experiencer now identifies himself with the 'I' in the speaker. So this 'I' must have been in sleep also.

D.: Yes.

M.: So 'I' was in sleep, if the world was then there, did it say that it existed?

D.: No. But the world tells me its existence now. Even if I deny its existence, I may knock myself against a stone and hurt my foot. The injury proves the existence of the stone and so of the world.

M.: Quite so. The stone hurts the foot. Does the foot say that there is the stone?

D.: No. - 'I'.

M.: Who is this 'I'? It cannot be the body nor the mind as we have seen before. This 'I' is the one who experiences the waking, dream and sleep states. The three states are changes which do not affect the individual. The experiences are like pictures passing on a screen in the cinema. The appearance and disappearance of the pictures do not affect the screen. So also, the three states alternate with one another leaving the Self unaffected. The waking and the dream states are creations of the mind. So the Self covers all. To know that the Self remains happy in its perfection is Self-Realisation. Its use lies in the realisation of Perfection and thus of Happiness.

D.: Can it be complete happiness to remain Self-realised if one does not contribute to the happiness of the world? How can one be so

happy when there is a war in Spain, a war in China? Is it not selfishness to remain Self-realised without helping the world?

M.: The Self was pointed out to you to cover the universe and also transcend it. The world cannot remain apart from the Self. If the realisation of such Self be called selfishness that selfishness must cover the world also. It is nothing contemptible.

D.: Does not the realised man continue to live just like a non-realised being?

M.: Yes, with this difference that the realised being does not see the world as being apart from the Self, he possesses true knowledge and the internal happiness of being perfect, whereas the other person sees the world apart, feels imperfection and is miserable. Otherwise their physical actions are similar.

D.: The realised being also knows that there are wars being waged in the world, just like the other man.

M.: Yes.

D.: How then can he be happy?

M.: Is the cinema screen affected by a scene of fire burning or sea rising? So it is with the Self.

The idea that I am the body or the mind is so deep that one cannot get over it even if convinced otherwise. One experiences a dream and knows it to be unreal on waking. Waking experience is unreal in other states. So each state contradicts the others. They are therefore mere changes taking place in the seer, or phenomena appearing in the Self, which is unbroken and remains unaffected by them. Just as the waking, dream and sleep states are phenomena, so also birth, growth and death are phenomena in the Self. which continues to be unbroken and unaffected. Birth and death are only ideas. They pertain to the body or the mind. The Self exists before the birth of this body and will remain after the death of this body. So it is with the series of bodies taken up in succession. The Self is immortal. The phenomena are changeful and appear mortal. The fear of death is of the body. It is not true of the Self. Such fear is due to ignorance. Realisation means True Knowledge of the Perfection and Immortality of the Self. Mortality is only an idea and cause of misery. You get rid of it by realising the Immortal nature of the Self.

3rd May, 1938

The same lady continued: If the world is only a dream, how should it be harmonised with the Eternal Reality?

M.: The harmony consists in the realisation of its inseparateness from the Self.

D.: But a dream is fleeting and unreal. It is also contradicted by the waking state.

M.: The waking experiences are similar.

D.: One lives fifty years and finds a continuity in the waking experience which is absent in dreams.

M.: You go to sleep and dream a dream in which the experiences of fifty years are condensed within the short duration of the dream, say five minutes. There is also a continuity in the dream. Which is real now? Is the period covering fifty years of your waking state real or the short duration of five minutes of your dream? The standards of time differ in the two states. That is all. There is no other difference between the experiences.

D.: The spirit remains unaffected by the passing phenomena and by the successive bodies of repeated births. How does each body get the life to set it acting?

M.: The spirit is differentiated from matter and is full of life. The body is animated by it.

D.: The realised being is then the spirit and unaware of the world.

M.: He sees the world but not as separate from the Self.

D.: If the world is full of pain why should he continue the world-idea?

M.: Does the realised being tell you that the world is full of pain? It is the other one who feels the pain and seeks the help of the wise saying that the world is painful. Then the wise one explains from his experience that if one withdraws within the Self there is an end of pain. The pain is felt so long as the object is different from oneself. But when the Self is found to be an undivided whole who and what is there to feel? The realised mind is the Holy Spirit and the other mind is the home of the devil. For the realised being this is the Kingdom of Heaven. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." That Kingdom is *here* and *now*.

Talk 488.

A group of young men asked: “It is said that healthy mind can be only in a healthy body. Should we not attempt to keep the body always strong and healthy?”

M.: In that way there will be no end of attention to the health of the body.

D.: The present experiences are the result of past Karma. If we know the mistakes committed in the past, we can rectify them.

M.: If one mistake is rectified there yet remains the whole *sanchita* which is going to give you innumerable births. So that is not the procedure. The more you prune a plant, the more vigorously it grows. The more you rectify your Karma, the more it accumulates. Find the root of Karma and cut it off.

4th May, 1938

Talk 489.

Another group of visitors was asking the method of Realisation. In the course of a reply Sri Bhagavan said: “Holding the mind and investigating it is advised for a beginner. But what is mind after all? It is a projection of the Self. See for whom it appears and from where it rises. The ‘I-thought’ will be found to be the root-cause. Go deeper; the ‘I-thought’ disappears and there is an infinitely expanded ‘I-consciousness’. That is otherwise called *Hiranyagarbha*. When it puts on limitations it appears as individuals.”

Talk 490.

The English lady desired to have a private talk with Sri Bhagavan. She began, “I am returning to England. I leave this place this evening. I want to have the happiness of Self-Realisation in my home. Of course it is not easy in the West. But I shall strive for it. What is the way to do it?”

M.: If Realisation be something outside you a way can be shown consistent with the safety of the individual, his capacity. etc. Then the questions if it is realisable and, if so, in what time - will also arise. But here, Realisation is of the Self. You cannot remain without

the Self. The Self is always realised. But only you do not recognise the fact. The Realisation is now obscured by the present world-idea. The world is now seen outside you and the idea associated with it obscures your real nature. All that is needed is to overcome this ignorance and then the Self stands revealed. No special effort is necessary to realise the Self. All efforts are for eliminating the present obscuration of the Truth.

A lady is wearing a necklace round her neck. She forgets it, imagines it to be lost and impulsively looks for it here, there and everywhere. Not finding it, she asks her friends if they have found it anywhere, until one kind friend points to her neck and tells her to feel the necklace round the neck. The seeker does so and feels happy that the necklace is found. Again, when she meets her other friends, they ask her if her lost necklace was found. She says 'yes' to them, as if it were lost and later recovered. Her happiness on re-discovering it round her neck is the same as if some lost property was recovered. In fact she never lost it nor recovered it. And yet she was once miserable and now she is happy. So also with the realisation of the Self. The Self is always realised. The Realisation is now obscured. When the veil is removed the person feels happy at rediscovering the ever-realised Self. The ever-present Realisation appears to be a new Realisation.

Now, what should one do to overcome the present ignorance. Be eager to have the true knowledge. As this eagerness grows the wrong knowledge diminishes in strength until it finally disappears.

D.: The other day you were saying that there is no awareness in deep sleep. But I have on rare occasions become aware of sleep even in that state.

M.: Now, of these three factors, the awareness, sleep and knowledge of it, the first one is changeless. That awareness, which cognised sleep as a state, now sees the world also in the waking state. The negation of the world is the state of sleep. The world may appear or disappear - that is to say, one may be awake or asleep - the awareness is unaffected. It is one continuous whole over which the three states of waking, dream and sleep pass. Be that awareness even now. That is the Self - that is Realisation - there is Peace - there is Happiness.

The lady thanked Maharshi and retired.

7th May, 1938

Talk 491.

Mr. Kishorelal Mashruwala, President, Gandhi Seva Sangh, asked: "How is *Brahmacharya* to be practised in order that it may be successfully lived up to?"

M.: It is a matter of will-power. *Satvic* food, prayers, etc., are useful aids to it.

D.: Young men have fallen into bad habits. They desire to get over them and seek our advice.

M.: Mental reform is needed.

D.: Can we prescribe any special food, exercise, etc., to them?

M.: There are some medicines. Yogic *asanas* and *satvic* food are also useful.

D.: Some young persons have taken a vow of *brahmacharya*. They repent of the vow after the lapse of ten or twelve years. Under these circumstances should we encourage young persons to take the vow of *brahmacharya*?

M.: This question will not arise in the case of true *brahmacharya*.

D.: Some young men take the vow of *brahmacharya* without knowing its full implications. When they find it difficult to carry it out in practice, they seek our advice.

M.: They need not take a vow but they may try it without the vow.

D.: Is *naishthika brahmacharya* (life-long celibacy) essential as a *sadhana* for Self-Realisation?

M.: Realisation itself is *naishthika brahmacharya*. The vow is not *brahmacharya*. Life in Brahman is *brahmacharya* and it is not a forcible attempt at it.

D.: It is said that *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), etc.. vanish in the presence of the Sadguru. Is it so?

M.: It is correct. *Kama* and *krodha* must vanish before Self-Realisation.

D.: But all the disciples of a guru are not of the same degree of advancement. There are found lapses in a few cases. Who is responsible for such lapses?

M.: There is no connection between Self-Realisation and individual predispositions (*samskara*). It is not always possible to live up to the ideal of the Guru.

D.: Do not passions affect Realisation?

M.: The attempt to cleanse oneself will be automatic.

D.: Is it not necessary to wash off all impurities before Realisation?

M.: Jnana will wash them clean.

D.: Gandhiji is often perplexed finding his intimate disciples going wrong. He wonders how it could happen and thinks that it is due to his own defects. Is it so?

M.: (Sri Bhagavan smiled and answered after a few minutes) Gandhiji has struggled so long to perfect himself. All others will be right in due course.

D.: Is the Hindu view of reincarnation correct?

M.: No definite answer is possible for this question. There are pros and cons for the view. Even the present birth is denied *natvevaham jatu nasam* etc., (*Bhagavad Gita*). We were never born, etc.

D.: Is not individuality *anadi* (without beginning)?

M.: Investigate and see if there is any individuality at all. Ask this question after solving this problem.

Nammalvar says: “In ignorance I took the ego to be myself; however, with right knowledge, the ego is nowhere and only you remain as the SELF.”

Both monists and dualists are agreed on the necessity of Self-Realisation. Let us do it first and then discuss the side-issues. *Advaita* or *dvaita* cannot be decided on theoretical considerations alone. If the Self is realised the question will not arise at all. Even Suka had no confidence in his *brahmacharya* whereas Sri Krishna was sure of his *brahmacharya*. Self-Realisation is designated by so many different names, *satya*, *brahmacharya*, etc. What is natural to the state of Self-Realisation forms the disciplinary course in the other state. “I-am-the-body” idea will become extinct only on Self-Realisation. With its extinction the *vasanas* become extinct and all virtues will remain ever.

D.: Samskaras are said to persist even in a *jnani*.

M.: Yes. They are *bhoga hetu* (leading to enjoyment only) and not *bandha hetu*.

D.: This fact is often abused by fakes who pretend to be *sadhus* but lead vicious lives. They say it is *prarabdha* (remnant of past Karma). How shall we mark off the fakes from the genuine *sadhus*?

M.: The one who has given up the idea of being the doer cannot repeat, "This is my *prarabdha*". "The *jnanis* lead different lives" is said for the benefit of others. The *jnanis* cannot make use of this in explanation of their lives and conduct.

(After a few minutes, Sri Bhagavan remarked about Mr. Kishorelal's weak body).

Mr. Kishorelal: I am asthmatic. I have never been strong. Even as a baby I was not fed on my mother's milk.

M.: Here the mind is strong and the body is weak.

D.: I wanted to practise Raja Yoga. I could not do it because of my physical unfitness. The mind also began to wander with the movement of the body.

M.: If the mind be kept immovable let the body change as much as it likes.

D.: Is it not a handicap to the beginner?

M.: Attempts must be made in spite of handicaps.

D.: Of course. But they will be momentary.

M.: The idea of 'momentary' is one among so many other ideas. So long as thoughts persist this idea also will recur. Concentration is our own nature (*i.e*. BE-ing). There is the effort now: but it ceases after Self-Realisation.

D.: It is said to be the interval between flights of mind

M.: This too is due to the activity of the mind.

The Devotee submitted that whenever he had thought that he had found something original, he later discovered that he was already forestalled.

Sri Bhagavan pointed out that everything remains already in the germinal form and so there can be nothing new.

8th May, 1938

Talk 492.

In a suit by the temple against the Government regarding the ownership of the Hill Sri Bhagavan was cited as a witness. He was examined by a commission. In the course of the examination-in-chief Sri Bhagavan said that Siva always remains in three forms: (1) as *Parabrahman* (2) as *Linga* (here as the Hill) and (3) as *Siddha*. (*Brahma Rupa; Linga Rupa; Siddha Rupa*).

There are some *tirthas* on the Hill, *e.g.*, *Mulaipal Tirtha* and *Pada Tirtha*, said to have been originated for or by Virupakshi Devar and Guha Namassivayar. There is also *Rshabha Tirtha*. All of them are in good condition.

Siva originally appeared as a column of Light. On being prayed to, the Light disappeared into the Hill and manifested as Linga. Both are Siva.

Maharshi said: The buildings or asramams grow around me. I do not wish for them. I do not ask for them nor prevent their formation. I have known that actions are done even though I did not want them to be done. So I conclude that they *must* happen and I therefore do not say 'no'.

Question: Is the present Sarvadhikari to be your successor?

M.: Yes. Only management.

(*i.e.*, succession here means simple supervision).

Question: Is the work now being carried out by him?

M.: He simply supervises the work. The work is being done by others as well.

18th May, 1938

Talk 493.

An Andhra visitor: What will aid me to fix my attention always at Thy Holy Feet?

M.: The thought 'Am I ever away from the feet?'

D.: How is this thought to be fixed?

M.: By driving away other thoughts which counteract this.

Talk 494.

Sri Bhagavan had gone through "Turn Eastwards" - the whole book of Mademoiselle Pascaline Maillert - and spoke for about an hour on that book. He said that the writing is full of feeling and the writer is sincere. The book is written in simple style and finishes off with remembrance of Himself. A few errors here and there might be pointed out to be corrected in subsequent editions. Nandanar Charitra has been repeated twice under the mistaken notion that the incident was on two different occasions. *Prithvi, Ap*, etc., *lingas* are wrongly located. Sri Bhagavan thinks the book well-written. He interprets "Turn Eastwards" as "Turn to the Source of Light". This book is a good supplement to Mr. Brunton's book.

29th May, 1938

Talk 495.

A Cochin Brahmin, Professor in the Ernakulam College, had an interesting conversation with Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan advised surrender to God. The visitor gave a glimpse of an ICS Officer. The gentleman while a student was an atheist or an agnostic. He is very pious now and the change has surprised everyone who had known him before.

In further conversation, the following points were noteworthy -

The visitor said: "One must become satiate with the fulfilment of desires before they are renounced." Sri Bhagavan smiled and cut in: "Fire might as well be put out by pouring spirit over the flames. (All laugh). The more the desires are fulfilled, the deeper grows the *samskara*. They must become weaker before they cease to assert themselves. That weakness is brought about by restraining oneself and not by losing oneself in desires.

D.: How can they be rendered weaker?

M.: By knowledge. You know that you are not the mind. The desires are in the mind. Such knowledge helps one to control them.

D.: But they are not controlled in our practical lives.

M.: Every time you attempt satisfaction of a desire the knowledge comes that it is better to desist. Repeated reminders of this kind

will in due course weaken the desires. What is your true nature? How can you ever forget it? Waking, dream and sleep are mere phases of the mind. They are not of the Self. You are the witness of these states. Your true nature is found in sleep.

D.: But we are advised not to fall into sleep during meditation.

M.: That is stupor you must guard against. That sleep which alternates with waking is not true sleep. That waking which alternates with sleep is not true waking. Are you now awake? You are not. You are required to wake up to your real state. You should not fall into false sleep nor keep falsely awake. Hence:

Laye sambodhayeccittam vikshiptam samayet punah.

What does it mean? It means that you should not fall into any one of these states but remain amidst them in your true unsullied nature.

D.: The states are of our mind only.

M.: Whose mind? Hold it and see.

D.: The mind cannot be held. It is that which creates all these. It is known only by its effects and not in its true nature.

M.: Quite so. You see the colours of the spectrum. Together they form the white light. But seven colours are seen through the prism. Similarly, the one Self resolves itself into so many phases, mind, world, body, etc. The Self is seen as the mind, the body or the world. That is to say, it becomes whatever you perceive it to be.

D.: These are difficult to follow in practice. I will hold on to God and surrender.

M.: That is the best.

D.: How can I do my duties without attachment? There is my wife, there are my children. I must do my duty towards them. Affection is necessary. Am I right?

M.: How do you do your work in the College?

D.: (laughing) For wages.

M.: Not because you are attached, simply as doing your duty.

D.: But my pupils expect me to love them.

M.: “Detachment in the interior and attachment in appearance,” says *Yoga Vasishta*.

9th June, 1938

Talk 496.

A *Swami* belonging to Sri Ramakrishna Mission had a very interesting conversation with Sri Bhagavan in the course of which Sri Bhagavan observed:

M.: Avidya (ignorance) is the obstacle for knowing your true nature even at the present moment.

D.: How is one to get over *Avidya*?

M.: Ya na vidyate sa avidya (What is not, is *avidya*). So it is itself a myth. If it really be, how can it perish? Its being is false and so it disappears.

D.: Although I understand it intellectually, I cannot realise the Self.

M.: Why should this thought disturb your present state of realisation.

D.: The Self is One, but yet I do not find myself free from the present trouble.

M.: Who says this? Is it the Self which is only one? The question contradicts itself.

D.: Grace is necessary for realisation.

M.: Inasmuch as you, being a man, now understand that there is a higher power guiding you, it is due to Grace. Grace is within you. *Isvaro gururatmeti* (*Isvara*, Guru and the Self are synonymous).

D.: I pray for that Grace.

M.: Yes, yes.

10th June, 1938

Talk 497.

In the course of a different conversation. Sri Bhagavan said:

Satva is the light,

Rajas is the subject, and

Tamas is the object.

Even the *satva* light is only reflected light. Were it pure, original Light, there would be no modification in it. The *manokasa* (mind-ether) is reflected as *bhootakasa* (element-ether) and objects are seen as being separate from the subject.

Samadhi is present even in *vyavaharadasa* (practical life). Our activities (*vyavahara*) have no existence apart from *samadhi*. The screen is there when the pictures move past on it and also when they are not projected. Similarly, the Self is always there in *vyavahara* (activity) or in *shanti* (peace).

Talk 498.

People often say that a *mukta purusha* should go out and preach his message to the people. They argue, how can anyone be a *mukta* so long as there is misery by his side? True. But who is a *mukta*? Does he see misery beside him? They want to determine the state of a *mukta* without themselves realising the state. From the standpoint of the *mukta* their contention amounts to this: a man dreams a dream in which he finds several persons. On waking up, he asks, "Have the dream individuals also wakened?" It is ridiculous.

Again, a good man says, "It does not matter even if I do not get *mukti*. Or let me be the last man to get it so that I shall help all others to be *muktas* before I am one." It is all very good. Imagine a dreamer saying, "May all these wake up before I do". The dreamer is no more absurd than the amiable philosopher aforesaid.

Talk 499.

The *Swami* of Sri Ramakrishna Mission had more questions to ask:

Swamiji, I went up the hill to see the *asramas* in which you lived in your youth. I have also read your life. May I know if you did not then feel that there is God to whom you should pray or that you should practise something in order to reach this state?

M.: Read the life and you will understand. *Jnana* and *ajnana* are of the same degree of truth; that is, both are imagined by the ignorant; that is not true from the standpoint of the *jnani*.

D.: Is a *jnani* capable or likely to commit sins?

M.: An *ajnani* sees someone as a *jnani* and identifies him with the body. Because he does not know the Self and, mistakes his body for the Self, he extends the same mistake to the state of the *jnani*. The *jnani* is therefore considered to be the physical frame.

Again since the *ajnani*, though he is not the doer, yet imagines himself to be the doer and considers the actions of the body his own, he thinks the *jnani* to be similarly acting when the body is active. But the *jnani* himself knows the Truth and is not confounded. The state of a *jnani* cannot be determined by the *ajnani* and therefore the question troubles only the *ajnani* and never does it arise for the *jnani*. If he is a doer he must determine the nature of the actions. The Self cannot be the doer. Find out who is the doer and the Self is revealed.

D.: There could be no *advaita* in actions. That is how the questions arose.

M.: But the stanza says there should be. This 'do' is applicable only to the practiser and not the accomplished ones.

D.: Yes. I quite see it. Moreover, *advaita* cannot be practised in one's dealings with the Guru. For, consistently with it, he cannot receive instructions.

M.: Yes, the Guru is within and not without. A Tamil saint has said, "O Guru! always abiding within me, but manifesting now in human form only to guide and protect me!" What is within as the Self manifests in due course as Guru in human shape.

D.: So it amounts to this. To see a *jnani* is not to understand him. You see the *jnani's* body and not his *jnanam*. One must therefore be a *jnani* to know a *jnani*.

M.: The *jnani* sees no one as an *ajnani*. All are only *jnanis* in his sight. In the ignorant state one superimposes his ignorance on a *jnani* and mistakes him for a doer. In the state of *jnana*, the *jnani* sees nothing separate from the Self. The Self is all shining and only pure *jnana*. So there is no *ajnana* in his sight. There is an illustration for this kind of allusion or super-imposition. Two friends went to sleep side by side. One of them dreamt that both of them had gone on a long journey and had strange experiences. On waking up he recapitulated them and asked his friend if it was not so. The other one simply ridiculed him saying that it was only his dream and could not affect the other.

So it is with the *ajnani* who superimposes his illusive ideas on others.

Regarding *ajnana* in early youth and *jnana* at the present time, Sri Bhagavan said: There is no *jnana* as it is commonly understood. The ordinary ideas of *jnana* and *ajnana* are only relative and false. They are not real and therefore not abiding. The true state is the non-dual Self. It is eternal and abides whether one is aware or not. It is like *kanthabharana* or the tenth man.

D.: Someone else points it out.

M.: That one is not external. You mistake the body for the Guru. But the Guru does not think himself so. He is the formless Self. That is within you; he appears without only to guide you.

Talk 500.

D.: When all the thoughts are banished and the mind is still or enters into a state of nothingness or emptiness, what is the nature of effort needed on the part of the 'seeker' to have a *pratyakshabhava* of the 'sought' (*e.g.*, seeing a mango as a mango)?

M.: Who sees nothingness or emptiness? What is *pratyaksha*? Do you call perception of mango *pratyaksha*? It involves the play of *karma*, *karta*, and *karya* (action, doer and deed). So it is relative and not absolute. Because you see a thing now you say there is nothing afterwards (*i.e.*, when you no longer see it). Both are functions of the mind. What lies behind both these assertions is *pratyaksha*. There is *indriya pratyaksha* (directly perceived by senses), *manasa pratyaksha* (directly perceived by the mind) and *sakshat pratyaksha* (realised as the very Being). The last alone is true. The others are relative and untrue.

D.: If no effort is needed, can the perpetuated state of emptiness of mind be called the state of realisation?

M.: Effort is needed so long as there is mind. The state of emptiness has been the bone of contention in all philosophies.

D.: Is there anything like *pratyakshabhava* in the state of realisation or is realisation merely felt or experienced as the very Being or *Sthiti* of the soul?

M.: Pratyaksha is very being and it is not feeling, etc.

D.: Until the seeker realizes that he is the sought, the above questions arise for him (the former).

M.: True. See if you are the seeker. The Self is often mistaken for the knower. Is there not the Self in deep sleep, *i.e.*, nescience? Therefore the Self is beyond knower and knowledge. These doubts are in the realm of mind. To speak from this point of view, the advice is to keep the mind clear, and when *rajas* and *tamas* are wiped off, then the *satva* mind alone exists. So the 'I' vanishes in the *satva* (*oonadhal kan*).

Jnana chakshus does not mean that it is an organ of perception like the other sense-organs. *Jnanameva chakshuh*. Television, etc., are not functions of *jnana chakshus*. So long as there is a subject and also an object it is only relative knowledge. *Jnana* lies beyond relative knowledge. It is absolute.

The Self is the source of subject and object. Now ignorance prevailing, the subject is taken to be the source. The subject is the knower and forms one of the triads whose components cannot exist independent of one another. So the subject or the knower cannot be the ultimate Reality. Reality lies beyond subject and object. When realised there will be no room for doubt.

"*Bhidyate hridayagranthih*
chhidyante sarvasamsayah."

The heart knot is snapped; doubts are set at rest. That is called *pratyaksha* and not what you are thinking of. *Avidya nasa* is alone Self-Realisation. Self-Realisation is only *owpacharika*. Self-Realisation is only a euphemism for elimination of ignorance.

12th July, 1938

Talk 501.

A young Mysorean asked:

D.: How did I get this body?

M.: You speak of 'I' and the 'body'. There is the relationship between the two. You are not therefore the body. The question does not occur to the body because it is inert. There is an occasion when you are not aware of the body - namely, in deep sleep. The question does not arise then. Nevertheless you are there in sleep. To whom does the question arise now?

D.: The ego.

M.: Yes. The body and the ego rise up together and sink together. There is an occasion when you are not associated with the ego in deep sleep. Now you are associated with the ego. Of these two states which is your real state? You are present in sleep and the same "You" is present now too. Why should the doubt arise now and not then? You are right in saying that it is for the ego. You are not the ego. The ego is intermediate between the Self and the body. You are the Self. Find out the origin of the ego and see if the doubt persists.

Sri Bhagavan added after a few minutes: The answer, according to *sastras*, will be that the body is due to *karma*. The question will be how did *karma* arise? We must say "from a previous body" and so on without end. The direct method of attack is not to depend on invisible hypotheses but to ask "Whose *Karma* is it? Or whose body?" Hence I answered in this manner. This is more purposeful.

14th August, 1938

Talk 502.

Sjt. Rajendra Prasad and Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj with others are on a visit to Sri Maharshi.

16th August - Sjt. J. B. asked questions:

D.: How is the mind to be steadily kept right?

M.: All living beings are aware of their surroundings and therefore intellect must be surmised in all of them. At the same time, there is a difference between the intellect of man and that of other animals, because man not only sees the world as it is and acts accordingly, but also seeks fulfilment of desires and is not satisfied with the existing state of affairs. In his attempt to fulfil his desires he extends his vision far and wide and yet he turns away dissatisfied. He now begins to think and reason.

The desire for permanency of happiness and of peace bespeaks such permanency in his own nature. Therefore he seeks to find and regain his own nature, *i.e.*, his Self. That found, all is found.

Such inward seeking is the path to be gained by man's intellect. The intellect itself realises after continuous practice that it is enabled

by some Higher Power to function. It cannot itself reach that Power. So it ceases to function after a certain stage. When it thus ceases to function the Supreme Power is still left there all alone. That is Realisation; that is the finality; that is the goal.

It is thus plain that the purpose of the intellect is to realise its own dependence upon the Higher Power and its inability to reach the same. So it must annihilate itself before the goal is gained.

D.: A sloka is quoted which means: "I do not desire kingdoms, etc. Only let me serve Thee for ever and there lies my highest pleasure." Is that right?

M.: Yes. There is room for *kama* (desire) so long as there is an object apart from the subject (*i.e.*, duality). There can be no desire if there is no object. The state of no-desire is *moksha*. There is no duality in sleep and also no desire. Whereas there is duality in the waking state and desire also is there. Because of duality a desire arises for the acquisition of the object. That is the outgoing mind, which is the basis of duality and of desire. If one knows that Bliss is none other than the Self the mind becomes inward turned. If the Self is gained all the desires are fulfilled. That is the *apta kamah atma kamah akamascha* (fulfilment of desire) of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. That is *moksha*.

Here J. B. tried to make himself clear by saying that what he meant by *sadbuddhi* was not the same as *buddhi*. It means that which holds fast to the good, the right and the chosen path. He wanted to know how such steadfastness could be gained.

M.: What is wanted for gaining the highest goal is loss of individuality. The intellect is co-extensive with individuality. Loss of individuality can only be after the disappearance of *buddhi*, good or bad. The question therefore does not arise.

D.: But yet one must know the right thing, choose the right path, practise the right *dharma* and hold fast to it. Otherwise he is lost.

M.: True strength accrues by keeping in the right direction without swerving from it.

D.: Difficulties are met with. How is one to get the strength necessary to overcome the obstacles which beset one's path?

M.: By means of devotion and company of the sages.

D.: Loss of individuality was just before mentioned as a prerequisite to *moksha*. Now devotion and association with the wise are advised as the methods. Is there not individuality implied in them *e.g.*, in "I am a *bhakta*", "I am a *satsangi*"?

M.: The method is pointed out to the seeker. The seeker has certainly not lost his individuality so far. Otherwise the question would not have arisen. The way is shown to effect the loss of individuality of the seeker. It is thus appropriate.

D.: Is the desire for *swaraj* right?

M.: Such desire no doubt begins with self-interest. Yet practical work for the goal gradually widens the outlook so that the individual becomes merged in the country. Such merging of the individuality is desirable and the related *karma* is *nishkama* (unselfish) .

D.: If *swaraj* is gained after a long struggle and terrible sacrifices, is not the person justified in being pleased with the result and elated by it?

M.: He must have in the course of his work surrendered himself to the Higher Power whose Might must be kept in mind and never lost sight of. How then can he be elated? He should not even care for the result of his actions. Then alone the *karma* becomes unselfish.

D.: How can unerring rectitude be ensured for the worker?

M.: If he has surrendered himself to God or to Guru the Power to which he had surrendered will take him on the right course. The worker need no longer concern himself about the rectitude or otherwise of the course. The doubt will arise only if he fails to obey the Master in all details.

D.: Is there not any Power on earth which can bestow Grace on Its devotees so that they may grow strong to work for the country and gain *swaraj*? (Sri Maharshi remained silent. This, He later said, signified that such was the case).

D.: Is not the *tapasya* of the ancient *mahatmas* of the land available for the benefit of its present-day inheritors?

M.: It is, but the fact must not be overlooked that no one can claim to be the sole beneficiary. The benefits are shared by all alike.

(After a pause) Is it without such saving Grace that the present awakening has come into being? (Here Sri Bhagavan said that before His arrival in Tiruvannamalai in 1896, there was not any clear political thought in India. Only Dadabhai Nauroji had become an M.P.).

After a short pause, J. B. said: Sri Rajendra Prasad is such a noble and selfless worker for the country that he has sacrificed a very lucrative career for this work. The country needs him. And yet he is not in good health, and is always weak and ailing. Why should there be such cruelty to such a noble son of the country?

(Sri Maharshi simply smiled a benign smile).

17th August, 1938

Talk 503.

An American gentleman, Mr. J. M. Lorey, has been staying in the Asramam for about two months. He asked:

I am leaving tonight. It gives me pain to tear myself away from this place. But I must go to America. I ask for a message from the Master. The Master understands me even better than I do myself. So I pray for a message to keep me up when I am away from the Master.

M.: The Master is not outside you as you seem to imagine. He is within, is in fact the Self. Recognise this truth. Seek within you and find Him there. Then you will have constant communion with Him. The message is always there; it is never silent; it can never forsake you: nor can you ever move away from the Master.

Your mind is outgoing. Because of that tendency it sees objects as being outside and the Master among them. But the Truth is different. The Master is the Self. Turn the mind within and you will find the objects within. You will also realise that it is the Master who is your very Self and there is nothing but Him.

Because you identify yourself with the body you have accepted objects as being outside you. But are you the body? You are not. You are the Self. *There* are all the objects and the whole universe. Nothing can escape the Self. How then can you move away from the Master who is your very Self? Suppose your body moves from

place to place; does it ever move away from your Self? Similarly, you can never be without the Master.

Mr. Lorey was struck by the answer although he was already familiar with the Master's ways. He was even visibly moved. He prayed that the Grace of the Master might abide with him.

Sri Bhagavan: The Master being the Self. Grace is inseparable from the Self.

Mr. L. Saluted Sri Maharshi with intense fervour, saying: that he might be enabled to realise the Truth.

M.: Is there any moment when you have not realised the Self? Can you ever be apart from the Self? You are always That.

D.: You are the great Master shedding joy and bliss on the world. Your love is indeed unlimited that you choose to abide in the world in human shape! But I wish to know if one should necessarily realise one's Self before being of help to the country and a leader of men.

M.: Realise the Self first and the rest will follow.

D.: America is now the foremost country in industrial matters, mechanical engineering, scientific advance and other worldly affairs. Will she come up to the same level in spiritual life also?

M.: Certainly, she is bound to.

D.: Thank God that it will be so! I am a partner in an Engineering firm. But it is not of vital concern to me. I try to bring spiritual ideals into the work-a-day life of the firm.

M.: That is good. If you surrender yourself to the Higher Power all is well. That Power sees your affairs through. Only so long as you think that you are the worker you are obliged to reap the fruits of your actions. If on the other hand, you surrender yourself and recognise your individual self as only a tool of the Higher Power, that Power will take over your affairs along with the fruits of actions. You are no longer affected by them and the work goes on unhampered. Whether you recognise the Power or not the scheme of things does not alter. Only there is a change of outlook. Why should you bear your load on the head when you are travelling on a train? It carries you and your load whether the load is on your head or on the floor of the train. You are not lessening the burden of the train by keeping

it on your head but only straining yourself unnecessarily. Similar is the sense of doership in the world by the individuals.

D.: I have been interesting myself in metaphysics for over twenty years. But I have not gained any novel experience as so many others claim to do. I have no powers of clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc. I feel myself locked up in this body and nothing more.

M.: It is right. Reality is only one and that is the self. All the rest are mere Phenomena in it, of it and by it. The seer, the objects and the sight, all are the self only. Can anyone see or hear, leaving the self aside? What difference does it make to see or hear anyone in close proximity or over enormous distance? The organs of sight and hearing are needed in both cases; so also the mind is required. None of them can be dispensed with in either case. There is dependence one way or another. Why then should there be a glamour about clairvoyance or clairaudience?

Moreover, what is acquired will also be lost in due course. They can never be permanent.

The only permanent thing is Reality; and *that* is the Self. You say "I am", "I am going", "I am speaking", "I am working", etc. Hyphenate "I am" in all of them. Thus I - AM. *That* is the abiding and fundamental Reality. This truth was taught by God to Moses: "I AM that I-AM". "Be still and know that I-AM God." so "I-AM" is God.

You know that you are. You cannot deny your existence at any moment of time. For you must be there in order to deny it. This (Pure Existence) is understood by stilling your mind. The mind is the outgoing faculty of the individual. If that is turned within, it becomes still in course of time and that "I-AM" alone prevails. "I-AM" is the whole Truth.

D.: I appreciate the whole answer.

M.: Who is there to appreciate what?

A question about Heart. Sri Bhagavan said: Leave alone the idea of *right* and *left*. They pertain to the body. The Heart is the Self. Realise it and then you will see for yourself. (Mr. Lorey thanked Sri Bhagavan and saluted him before retiring.)

18th August, 1938

Talk 504.

A visitor asked Sri Bhagavan about the 'over-mind', and 'super-mind', the 'Psychic', the 'Divine' of Sri Aurobindo's terminology.

M.: Realise the Self or the Divine. All these differences will disappear.

Talk 505.

Babu Rajendra Prasad said: I have come here with Mahatma Gandhiji's permission and I must return to him soon. Can Sri Bhagavan give me any message for him?

M.: Adhyatma sakti is working within him and leading him on. That is enough. What more is necessary?

19th August, 1938

Talk 506.

Explaining the opening stanza of *Sad Vidya*, Sri Bhagavan said: *Sat* (Being) is *Chit* (Knowledge Absolute); also *Chit* is *Sat*; what is, is only one. Otherwise the knowledge of the world and of one's own being will be impossible. It denotes both being and knowledge. However, both of them are one and the same. On the other hand, be it *Sat* only and not *Chit* also, such *Sat* will only be insentient (*jada*). In order to know it another *Chit* will be needed; such *Chit* being other than *Sat* cannot be. But it must be. Now taking *Chit* to be *Sat*, since *Sat* is *Jada*, *Chit* also becomes *jada* which is absurd. Again to know it another *Chit* is required, which is also absurd.

Therefore *Sat* and *Chit* are only one and the same.

22nd August, 1938

Talk 507.

An Arya Samajist from Bangalore with a companion visited Sri Maharshi. He asked: What is the use of yoga-practice? Is it for personal use or universal benefit?

M.: Yoga means union of two entities. What are they? Enquire. Use or benefit is in relation to some centre. What is it? Enquire.

D.: Should there be distinction of castes?

M.: Who is it that sees such distinction? Find it out.

D.: I find that it is observed in this Asramam. Probably without the approval of Sri Bhagavan others observe it here.

M.: Who are you that speak of others, etc.? Did you notice others, etc., in your *sushupti*?

D.: I am the individuality here. I may not see others in my sleep but I see them now.

M.: No doubt you do. But the one who sees now and the one who did not see in sleep are you only - the same individual. Why should you notice differences now and be troubled? Be as you were in sleep.

D.: That cannot be. I see it now whereas I do not see it in my sleep. That does not alter the existing state of affairs.

M.: Do the objects exist in the absence of the subject?

D.: Their existence is independent of the subject.

M.: Do you say that they exist, or do they come and announce their existence to you?

D.: I know that they exist.

M.: So it is your knowledge of them only. Their existence is not absolute.

D.: Even if I did not know they will continue to exist.

M.: Do you claim their existence in the absence of your knowledge of them? (Laughter).

D.: Brahman is equal to all. There cannot be any distinction there. Caste-distinction is against the highest principle.

M.: Why do you drag in Brahman? He has no grievances. Let him who has grievances pursue the matter.

D.: You are a Mahatma. You cannot admit castes. But how do the people here enforce such distinctions?

M.: Did I tell you that I am a *jnani* or a *mahatma*? You are saying it yourself. Nor did I make a grievance of this caste affair.

D.: Paramatma is the same in all.

M.: Why do you bring in all these names? They can take care of themselves. They do not require your help.

D.: Mahatma Gandhi also admits equality...

M.: Gandhi is not here.

D.: Aurobindo does not approve of castes. Do you approve of them?

M.: As for Aurobindo, you ask him. As for my opinion, how does it matter to you? How will it be of use to you? Have you got any opinion on the matter? That alone will affect you, not the opinion of others.

D.: I do not approve of the caste system. Mahatma's opinion is valuable as a guidance. I want your blessings in my attempts.

M.: Mahatma has told you to seek and find your Self. You will not do it but require his blessings.

D.: I am trying to follow the instructions. But caste-distinction is painful. It must go.

M.: To whom does it cause pain?

D.: The members of the society...

M.: It is you who say it. There are countries where there are no such distinctions of caste. Are they free from trouble? There are wars, internecine struggle, etc. Why do you not remedy the evils there?

D.: There are troubles here also.

M.: Differences are always there. There are not only human beings, but also animals, plants, etc. The state of affairs cannot be helped.

D.: We do not mind the animals, etc., at present.

M.: Why not? If they could speak they would claim equality with you and dispute your claims no less vigorously than human beings.

D.: But we cannot help it. It is God's work.

M.: If that is God's work then the other part is your work, is that so?

D.: It is man-made distinction.

M.: You need not notice these distinctions. There is diversity in the world. A unity runs through the diversity. The Self is the same in all. There is no difference in spirit. All the differences are external and superficial. You find out the Unity and be happy.

The pain of diversity is overcome by the joy of the perception of unity. Moreover, a king may disguise himself as a servant. That makes no difference in the person.

D.: I do not object to differences. But the claims of superiority are wrong.

M.: There are differences in the limbs of one's body. When the hand touches the foot the hand is not defiled. Each limb performs its function. Why do you object to differences?

D.: The people feel the injustice of caste distinction. It must be rooted out.

M.: You can individually arrive at the state where such distinctions are not perceived and be happy. How can you hope to reform the world? Even if you try you cannot succeed. Kavyakantha Ganapati Sastri offered to initiate Harijans with *mantras* and make Brahmins of them. But the Harijans did not come forward to accept the offer. That shows they are themselves afflicted by an inferiority complex. Remove that complex first before you try to reform others.

Moreover, why do you go to places where such distinctions are observed and cause pain to yourself? Why should you not seek places where they are not observed and be happy there?

Gandhiji also tries to bring about equality. He is also up against the barrier of inferiority complex afflicting the lower orders. He cannot enforce his views on others. He observes non-violence. So matters stand as they are.

D.: We must work to obliterate caste-distinctions.

M.: Then do it. If you have succeeded in the world, then see if the distinctions persist in this place.

D.: This must be the first place where I want to effect the reform.

M.: Why do you exert yourself so much to effect reforms? Go to sleep and see if there are differences. There you obliterate differences without any effort. (Laughter).

24th August, 1938

Talk 508.

An Indian I. C. S. Officer was in the hall for a few hours. He asked: "Can *ahimsa* put an end to wars in the world?" Sri Bhagavan did not answer and it was time to go out for the evening walk. The next day when someone else repeated the question, Sri Bhagavan said that the question contained its answer. It is patent that in a state of perfect *ahimsa* there can be no war.

26th August, 1938

Talk 509.

Mr. MacIver had an interview with Sri Bhagavan and spoke about *diksha*.

Sri Bhagavan asked: What is this *diksha*?

After a pause, He continued, "*Diksha* is of various kinds, by word, by sight, by touch and so forth."

D.: Bhagavan's is *mowna diksha*, is it not?

M.: Yes, this the highest form of *diksha*.

D.: Is it applicable to the *vichara marga* only?

M.: All the *margas* are included in the *vichara marga*.

D.: Yes, but if one wished to take them separately, it would not be applicable. Would it?

M.: No.

D.: Supposing one feels the need for aids to Realisation these are to be regarded as belonging to accessory *margas*. Are they not?

M.: Yes.

D.: And for these then other *dikshas* would be necessary.

M.: Yes.

D.: From this another question arises: So long as I am at Bhagavan's feet, I cannot be regarded as a faithful Christian.

Sri Bhagavan interrupted saying that this was the essence of Christianity.

D.: Yes, but not in the eyes of the present representatives of the Church. Accordingly I can no longer look to the side of the Church for aid.

Have I Bhagavan's leave to look elsewhere?

M.: That is left to you.

After a pause Sri Bhagavan spoke to the effect that people who come here are brought by some mysterious Power which will look to their needs. The conversation practically ended with this.

7th September, 1938

Talk 510.

Mr. T. K. S. Iyer read out a passage from a book which admitted of five different divisions of *antahkaranas* as follows: (1) *Ullam*, (2) mind, (3) intellect, (4) *chittam*, (5) ego.

Sri Bhagavan said: Four divisions are usual. The fifth item *ullam* has been brought in to correspond to five *tattvas* thus:

(1) *Ullam* (consciousness) is *akasa* (ether) *tattva* from the cranium to the brows.

(2) *Manas* (thinking faculty) is *vayu* (air) *tattva* from the brows to the throat.

(3) *Buddhi* (intellect) is *agni* (light) *tattva* from the throat to the heart.

(4) *Chitta* (memory) is *jala* (water) *tattva* from the heart to the navel, and,

(5) *Ahankar* (ego) is *prithvi* (earth) *tattva* from the navel to the coccyx.

Ullam is thus the pure mind or the mind in its pure being, *i.e.*, mind divested of all thoughts. It is the ether of mind corresponding to the expanse of mind without being crowded by thoughts.

When a person wakes up from sleep the head is raised and there is the light of awareness. This light was already there in the heart which is later reflected on the brain and appears as consciousness. But this is not particularised until *ahankar* steps in. In the undifferentiated state it is cosmic (cosmic mind or cosmic consciousness). This state lasts usually for a minute interval and passes off unnoticed. It becomes particularised or differentiated by the intrusion of the ego and the person says ‘I’. This is always associated with an entity (here, the body). So the body is identified as ‘I’ and all else follows.

Because *ullam* is only the reflected light, it is said to be the moon. The original light is in the heart which is said to be the sun.

9th September, 1938

Talk 511.

Major Chadwick had translated *Na karmana na prajaya* ... into English. Sri Bhagavan was explaining its meaning. *Brahmaloka* may be interpreted subjectively or objectively. The latter meaning requires faith in the *sastras* which speak of such *lokas*, whereas the former meaning is purely of experience and requires no external authority. *Brahmaloka* would mean *Brahma jnana* (Knowledge of Brahman) or Self-Realisation (*Atma-Sakshatkara*). *Parantakala* as opposed to *aparantakala*. In the latter the *jivas* pass into oblivion to take other births. Their oblivion is enveloped in ignorance (*avidya*). *Para* is beyond the body. *Parantakala* is transcendence over the body, etc., *i.e., jnana* (knowledge). *Paramritat prakriteh* = beyond *prakriti*. *Sarve* implies that all are qualified for knowledge and liberation (*moksha*). *yatayah* = *yama niyama sametah sat purushah* = good men well disciplined. The whole passage implies passing into the real beyond the unreal.

> *na karmana na prajaya dhanena tyagenaike amritatvamanasuh*
> *parena nakam nihitam guhayam, vibhrajate yadyatayo visanti*
> *vedanta vijnana sunishchitarthah sanyasayogadyatayah shuddha satvah*
> *te brahmaloke tu parantakale paramritat parimuchyanti sarve*
> *dahram vipapam paravesmabhutum yat pundarikam puramadhya samstham*
> *tatrapi dahram gaganam visokastasmin yadantastadupasitavyam*
> *yo vedadau svarah prokto vedante cha pratishtitah tasya*
> *prakritilinasya yah parah sa Mahesvarah*

> [Deathlessness is not obtained through action or begetting offspring or wealth. Some attain that state through renunciation.
>
> The Sages (that have conquered the senses) attain that *Sat* which is more supreme than Heaven and shining all alone in the Heart.
>
> The adepts who by renunciation and one-pointedness are pure in heart and have known the certainty of Truth by the special knowledge proclaimed by Vedanta, get fully released in the *Brahmaloka* from the causal *Maya* at the dissolution of the body.

That alone which shines as the tiny *Akasa* void of sorrow, in the lotus heart, the tiny seat of the spotless Supreme in the (inner) core of the body is worthy of worship.

He alone is the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the Primal Word which is the beginning and end of the Veda and in which merges the creative Cause].

Mr. T. K. S. Iyer later asked something about *muktaloka* (region of liberated souls). Sri Bhagavan said that it meant the same as *Brahmaloka*.

D.: Asked if some *sukshma tanu* (subtle body) such as *pranava tanu* or *suddha tanu* (*tanu* = body; *suddha* = pure) was required to gain such *loka*.

M.: Pranava means *real japa*. It is however interpreted to be *A, U, M, Nada* and *Bindu*. Of these, the first three are interpreted as *Visva, Taijasa, Prajna* and *Virat, Hiranyagarbha, Isvara, Nada* and *Bindu* correspond to *prana* and *manas* (mind).

The Mandukya Upanishad speaks of the three *matras* and *turiya matra*. The final meaning is that it represents the real state.

To a further question, Bhagavan answered: There are said to be *Panchapada Mahavakyani* (*mahavakyas* with five words) *e.g.*, *Tattvamasi atinijam* (‘you are that’ is the great truth). The first three words have their *lakshya artha* (significance) all of which signify only the one Truth. So many efforts and so much discipline are said to be necessary for eradicating the non-existing *avidya*!

11th September, 1938

Talk 512.

Sri Bhagavan said: All mistake the mind-consciousness for Self-Consciousness. There is no mind in deep sleep; but no one denies his being in sleep. Even a child says on waking, “I slept well,” and does not deny its existence. The ‘I’ rises up, the mind turns outward through the five senses and perceives objects, this they call direct perception. Asked if ‘I’ is not directly perceived, they get confused, because ‘I’ does not announce itself as an object in front and only the perception with the senses can be recognised by them as knowledge: this habit is

so strong with them. A stanza in *Thevaram* says: “O sages, eager to get over all misery, worry not about inferences and examples! Our Light is ever shining forth from within! With mind clear, live in God!”

This is direct perception. Will the common people admit it? They want God to appear in front of them as a bright Being mounted on a bull. Such a vision once originated must also end. It is therefore transient. *Thevaram* speaks of the Eternal and Ever-experienced Being. This *Thevaram* takes one directly to the Reality.

16th September, 1938

Talk 513.

Major Chadwick again gave his versified translation of the *mantra* for Sri Bhagavan to read. Sri Bhagavan softly spoke of the interpretation of the *Bhashyakara* and further explained the same. To consider the *Brahmaloka* as a region is also admissible. That is what the *pouraniks* say and many other schools also imply it by expounding *kramamukti* (liberation by degrees). But the Upanishads speak of *sadyomukti* (immediate liberation) as in *Na tasya prana utkramanti; ihaiva praleeyante* - the *pranas* do not rise up; they lose themselves here. So *Brahmaloka* will be Realisation of Brahman (*Brahmasakshatkara*). It is a state and not a region. In the latter case, *paramritat* must be properly understood. It is *para* inasmuch as *avyakrita* is the causal Energy transcending the universe, *amrita* because it persists until the Self is realised. So that *paramritat* will mean *avyakrita*. The *kramamukti* (liberation by degrees) school say that the *upasaka* goes to the region of his *Ishta Devata* which is *Brahmaloka* to him. The souls passing to all other *lokas* return to be reborn. But those who have gained the *Brahmaloka* do not. Moreover those desirous of a particular *loka* can by proper methods gain the same. Whereas *Brahmaloka* cannot be gained so long as there is any desire left in the person. Desirelessness alone will confer the *loka* on him. His desirelessness signifies the absence of the incentive for rebirth.

The age of Brahma is practically immeasurable. The presiding deity of the *loka* is said to have a definite period of life. When he passes away his *loka* also is dissolved. The inmates are emancipated at the

same time, irrespective of the different nature of individual consciousness in them prior to Self-realisation.

The *kramamukti* school objects to the idea of *sadyomukti* (immediate liberation) because the *jnani* is supposed to lose body-consciousness at the same time that ignorance is dispelled but he continues to live in the body. They ask, “How does the body function without the mind?” The answer is somewhat elaborate:

Knowledge (*jnana*) is not incompatible with ignorance (*ajnana*) because the Self in purity is found to remain along with ignorance-seed (*ajnana beeja*) in sleep. But the incompatibility arises only in the waking and dream states. *Ajnana* has two aspects: *avarana* (veiling) and *vikshepa* (multiplicity). Of these, *avarana* (veiling) denotes the veil hiding the Truth. That prevails in sleep. Multiplicity (*vikshepa*) is activity in different times. This gives rise to diversity and prevails in waking and dream states (*jagrat* and *svapna*). If the veil, *i.e.*, *avarana* is lifted, the Truth is perceived. It is lifted for a *jnani* and so his *karana sarira* (causal body) ceases to exist. *Vikshepa* alone continues for him. Even so, it is not the same for a *jnani* as it is for an *ajnani*. The *ajnani* has all kinds of *vasanas*, *i.e.*, *kartrtva* (doership) and *bhoktrtva* (enjoyership), whereas the *jnani* has ceased to be doer (*karta*). Thus only one kind of *vasana* obtains for him. That too is very weak and does not overpower him, because he is always aware of the *Sat-Chit-Ananda* nature of the Self. The tenuous *bhoktrtva vasana* is the only remnant of the mind left in the *jnani* and he therefore appears to be living in the body.

This explanation when applied to the *mantra* amounts to this: A *jnani* has his *karana sarira* destroyed; the *sthula sarira* (gross body) has no effect on him and is for all practical purposes destroyed too. The *sukshma sarira* (subtle body) alone remains. It is otherwise called *ativahika sarira*. It is this which is held by all persons after the physical body is given up. And with this they traverse to other *lokas* until another suitable physical body is taken. The *jnani* is supposed to move in *Brahmaloka* with this *sukshma sarira*. Then that is also dissolved and he passes to final Liberation.

The whole explanation is meant only for the onlooker. The *jnani* himself will never raise such questions. He knows by his experience that he is not bound by any kind of limitations.

D.: What is the 'final emancipation' according to the foregoing explanation?

M.: The *ativahika* or the *sukshma sarira* corresponds to the pure light which one experiences just after sleep and before the rise of the ego. It is Cosmic Consciousness. That is only the Light reflected from the Heart. When the reflection ceases and abides as the Original Light in the Heart it is final emancipation.

D.: But *Yoga Vasishtha* says that the *chitta* (mind) of a *jivanmukta* is *achala* (unchanging).

M.: So it is. *Achala chitta* (unchanging mind) is the same as *suddha manas* (pure mind). The *jnani's manas* is said to be *suddha manas*. The *Yoga Vasishtha* also says that *Brahman* is no other than the *jnani's* mind. So *Brahman* is *suddha manas* only.

D.: Will the description of *Brahman* as *Sat-Chit-Ananda* suit this *suddha manas*? For this too will be destroyed in the final emancipation.

M.: If *suddha manas* is admitted, the Bliss (*Ananda*) experienced by the *jnani* must also be admitted to be reflected. This reflection must finally merge into the Original. Therefore the *jivanmukti* state is compared to the reflection of a spotless mirror in another similar mirror. What will be found in such a reflection? Pure *Akasa* (Ether). Similarly, the *jnani's* reflected Bliss (*Ananda*) represents only the true Bliss.

These are all only words. It is enough that a person becomes *antarmukhi* (inward-bent). The *sastras* are not needed for an inward turned mind. They are meant for the rest.

Talk 514.

Mr. MacIver, a resident devotee, asked Sri Bhagavan if he might go to Switzerland where a Guru was inviting him. Sri Bhagavan said: Some Force brought him here and the same is taking him to Europe. Let him always remember that the world is only a projection of the mind, and the mind is in the Self. Wherever the body may move the mind must be kept under control. The body moves, but not the Self. The world is within the Self, that is all.

17th September, 1938

Talk 515.

D.: In the explanation given yesterday, it is said that the removal of *avarana* results in the annihilation of the *karana sarira*. That is clear. But how is the gross body considered to fall off too?

M.: The *vasanas* are of two kinds: *bandha hetu* (causing bondage) and *bhoga hetu* (only giving enjoyment). The *jnani* has transcended the ego and therefore all the causes of bondage are inoperative. *Bandha hetu* is thus at an end and *prarabdha* (past *karma*) remains as *bhoga vasana* (to give enjoyment) only. Therefore it was said that the *sukshma sarira* alone survives *jnana*. *Kaivalya* says that *sanchita* Karma (stored Karma) is at an end simultaneously with the rise of *jnana*; that *agami* (Karma now collecting) is no longer operative owing to the absence of the sense of bondage, and that *prarabdha* will be exhausted by enjoyment (*bhoga*) only. Thus the last one will end in course of time and then the gross body also falls away with it.

Sarira traya (the three bodies) and Karma *traya* (the three Karmas) are mere phrases meant for the delectation of debaters. A *jnani* is not affected by any of them.

An aspirant is instructed to find who he is. If he does so, he will take no interest in discussing such matters as the above. Find the Self and rest in Peace.

22nd September, 1938

Talk 516.

A question arose if the world is real or unreal, since it is claimed to be both by the *advaitins* themselves. Sri Bhagavan said that it is unreal if viewed as apart from the Self and real if viewed as the Self.

25th September, 1938

Talk 517.

There was some reference of two *slokas* in *Yoga Vasishtha* where spiritism in *mlechcha desa* is mentioned. Mr. MacIver said that black magic is more prevalent in the West than is ordinarily known to the observer. The writer then remembered how Mr. Paul Brunton had once said that he actually feared a woman for her association with black magic.

Sri Bhagavan asked if the gentleman had read *Devikalottaram*. He then said that *abhichara prayoga* (black magic) is condemned there. He also added that by such practices one compasses one's own ruin. *Avidya* (ignorance) is itself bad and makes one commit suicide. Why should black magic be also added to it?

D.: What is the *pratikriya* (remedy) open to the victim of black magic?

M.: Bhakti (devotion to God).

D.: Non-resistance seems to be the only remedy for all kinds of evil such as slander.

M.: Quite so. If one abuses another or injures him the remedy does not lie in retort or resistance. Simply keep quiet. This quiet will bring peace to the injured but make the offender restless until he is driven to admit his error to the injured party.

This black magic is said to have been used even against the greatest saints in India since time immemorial. The *tapasvis* of Daruka forest used it against Siva Himself.

Then the conversation turned on *Brahmaloka*.

Sri Bhagavan said *Brahmaloka* is the same as *Atmaloka*. Again *Brahmaiva lokah = Brahmalokah* (Brahma is Himself the region) and *Brahma* is *Atma*. So *Brahmaloka* is only the Self.

Loka, *aloka* are both synonymous. It is the same as *andamillakkan* in *Ulladu Narpadu*. *Lokyate iti lokah* (That which is seen is *loka*).

27th September, 1938

Talk 518.

Mr. V. Gupta, a Telugu Pandit, is on a visit here. Sri Bhagavan said in the course of conversation: *Ahamkriti* (the ego) is not the same as *aham*. The latter is the Supreme Reality whereas the former is the ego. It is to be overcome before the Truth is realised. The Supreme Being is unmanifest and the first sign of manifestation is *Aham Sphurana* (light of 'I'). The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says *Aham nama abhavat* (He became 'I' named). That is the original name of the Reality.

The Pandit asked about the operation of Grace. Is it the mind of the Guru acting on the mind of the disciple or anything different?

M.: The Highest Form of Grace is Silence (*mowna*). It is also the highest *upadesa*.

D.: Vivekananda has also said that silence is the loudest form of prayer.

M.: It is so, for the seeker's silence Guru's silence is the loudest *upadesa*. It is also Grace in its highest form. All other *dikshas* (initiations), *e.g., sparsa, chakshus* are derived from *mowna* (silence). They are therefore secondary. *Mowna* is the primary form. If the Guru is silent the seeker's mind gets purified by itself.

D.: Is it proper that one prays to God or Guru when one is afflicted by worldly ills?

M.: Undoubtedly.

Talk 519.

M.: The *mahavakyas* and their interpretation lead to interminable discussions and keep the minds of the seekers engaged externally. To turn the mind inward the man must directly settle down in the 'I'. Then there is an end of external activities and perfect Peace prevails.

Later, a passage from the *Yoga Vasishtha* was read out before Sri Bhagavan, indicating initiation by look and initiation by touch.

Sri Bhagavan observed: Dakshinamurti observed silence when the disciples approached Him. That is the highest form of initiation. It includes the other forms. There must be subject-object relationship established in the other *dikshas*. First the subject must emanate and then the object. Unless these two are there how is the one to look at the other or touch him? *Mowna diksha* is the most perfect; it comprises looking, touching and teaching. It will purify the individual in every way and establish him in the Reality.

Talk 520.

An Australian gentleman (Mr. Lowman) is on a visit here. He seems to be studying the Hindu system of Philosophy. He started saying that he believed in unity, the *jiva* is yet in illusion and so on.

M.: What is the unity you believe in? How can the *jiva* find a place in it?

D.: The Unity is the Absolute.

M.: The *jiva* cannot find a place in Unity.

D.: But the *jiva* has not realised the Absolute and imagines itself separate.

M.: Jiva is separate because it must exist in order to imagine something.

D.: But it is unreal.

M.: Any unreal thing cannot produce effects. It is like saying that you killed some animal with the horn of a hare. A hare does not grow horns.

D.: I see the absurdity. But I speak from the physical plane.

M.: You say, 'I'. Who is that 'I'? If that is found you can later say whose is the illusion.

A little later Sri Bhagavan asked:

You say you are in the physical plane now. In which plane are you in dreamless sleep?

D.: I think in the physical plane again.

M.: You say, "I think". That means that you are saying it now when you are awake. Anyway you admit that you exist in deep sleep. Don't you?

D.: Yes, but I did not function then.

M.: So then, you existed in deep sleep. You are the same one who continues to exist? Are you not?

D.: Yes.

M.: With this difference - that you did not function in your sleep. Rather you are associated with the thinking faculty in your waking state and you are dissociated from it in sleep. Is it not so?

D.: Yes.

M.: Which is then your real nature? Is it to be associated with thinking or to be dissociated?

D.: I see it now. But I was not aware of my being in sleep.

M.: You say so now. You do not say so in your sleep. Or do you deny your being (very existence in sleep)?

D.: No.

M.: It amounts to this that you exist in both states. The Absolute Existence is the Self. You are also conscious of the Existence. That Existence is also consciousness (*Sat* and *Chit*). That is your real nature.

D.: But thinking is necessary even for realisation.

M.: That thinking is aimed at the elimination of all thinking.

D.: Owing to my ignorance, I do not realise the Absolute Existence-Consciousness.

M.: Who is the 'I'? Whose is the ignorance! Answers to these questions will alone suffice to prove that you are already realised. Is there anyone who denies his own existence? Or can anyone say that he did not exist in his sleep? Pure Existence is thus admitted. The admission also implies consciousness. Thus all men are realised. There is no ignorant man at all.

D.: Yes, I understand. But I have a small question to ask. The state of Realisation is one of desirelessness. If a human being is desireless he ceases to be human.

M.: You admit your existence in sleep. You did not function then. You were not aware of any gross body. You did not limit yourself to this body. So you could not find anything separate from your Self.

Now in your waking state you continue to be the same Existence with the limitations of the body added. These limitations make you see other objects. Hence arises desire. But the state of desirelessness in sleep made you no less happy than now. You did not feel any want. You did not make yourself miserable by not entertaining desires. But now you entertain desires because you are limited to this human frame. Why do you wish to retain these limitations and continue to entertain desires?

Sri Bhagavan continued:

Does the body tell you that it is there? It is certainly something apart from the body that remains aware. What is it?

Do you say that it is the 'I', meaning the ego which arises simultaneously with the waking of the individual from sleep? Be it so. The body is not sentient. The Absolute does not speak. The ego does. One does not aspire for liberation in sleep. The aspiration arises only in the waking state. The functions of the waking state are those of the ego which is synonymous with the 'I'. Find out who this 'I' is. On doing so and abiding as 'I', all these doubts will be cleared up.

28th September, 1938

Talk 521.

Some Congressmen handed over the following questions to Maharshi:

1. How long is India destined to suffer bondage?

2. Have not the sons of India made enough sacrifice for her liberation?

3. Will India get freedom during Mahatma Gandhi's lifetime?

The above questions were not answered categorically. Sri Bhagavan simply remarked:

Gandhiji has surrendered himself to the Divine and works accordingly with no self-interest. He does not concern himself with the results but accepts them as they turn up. That must be the attitude of national workers.

Q.: Will the work be crowned with success?

M.: This question arises because the questioner has not surrendered himself.

Q.: Should we not then think of and work for the welfare of the country?

M.: First take care of yourself and the rest will naturally follow.

Q.: I am not speaking individually but for the country.

M.: First surrender and see. The doubts arise because of the absence of surrender. Acquire strength by surrender and then your surroundings will be found to have improved to the degree of strength acquired by you.

Q.: Should we not know if our actions will be worthwhile?

M.: Follow the example of Gandhiji in the work for the national cause. 'Surrender' is the word.

The following slip was also handed over to Sri Bhagavan:

"Four of us have come from Coorg and we had gone to Delhi to wait as a deputation on the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress and we are now going back. We are sent from the Coorg Congress Committee and so kindly give us some message to the Coorg District Congress Committee and the people of Coorg in general."

When this slip was handed over, Sri Bhagavan said that the same answer holds good here too. The message is contained in the word 'Surrender'.

29th September, 1938

Talk 522.

A visitor asked Sri Bhagavan: I want knowledge.

M.: Who wants knowledge?

D.: I want it.

M.: Who is that 'I'? Find the 'I' and see later what further knowledge is required.

2nd October, 1938

Talk 523.

A Pilgrims' special train brought several visitors from Bengal. One of them said that he had read Mr. Paul Brunton's book and since then he was anxious to see Sri Bhagavan. He also asked: How shall I overcome my passions?

M.: Find their root and then it will be easy. (Later) What are the passions? *Kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), etc. Why do they arise? Because of likes and dislikes towards the objects seen. How do the objects project themselves in your view? Because of your *avidya*, *i.e.*, ignorance. Ignorance of what? Of the Self. Thus, if you find the Self and abide therein there will be no trouble owing to the passions.

(Later) Again, what is the cause of the passions? Desire to be happy or enjoy pleasure. Why does the desire for happiness arise? Because your nature is happiness itself and it is natural that you come into your own. This happiness is not found anywhere besides the Self. Do not look for it elsewhere. But seek the Self and abide therein.

Still again, that happiness which is natural is simply re-discovered, so it cannot be lost. Whereas the happiness arising from other objects are external and thus liable to be lost. Therefore it cannot be permanent and so it is not worth seeking.

Moreover craving for pleasures should not be encouraged. One cannot put out burning fire by pouring petrol over it. An attempt to satisfy your craving for the time being, so that the passion may later be suppressed, is simply foolish.

There are, no doubt, other methods for the suppression of passion. They are (1) regulated food, (2) fasting, (3) yoga practice, (4) medicines. But their effects are transitory. The passions reappear with greater force as soon as the check is removed. The only way to overcome them is to eradicate them. That is done by finding their source as stated above.

Talk 524.

Another pilgrim asked: I am a man with a family. Is it possible for those in a family to get release, and if so how?

M.: Now what is family? Whose family is it? If the answers to these questions are found the other questions solve themselves.

Tell me: Are you in the family, or is the family in you?

The visitor did not answer. Then Sri Bhagavan's answer was continued: Who are you? You include three aspects of life, namely, the waking, the dream and the sleep states. You were not aware of the family and their ties in your sleep and so these questions did not arise then. But now you are aware of the family and their ties and therefore you seek release. But you are the same person throughout.

D.: Because I now feel that I am in the family it is right that I should seek release.

M.: You are right. But consider and say: Are you in the family or is the family in you?

Another visitor interposed: What is family?

M.: That's it. It must be known.

D.: There is my wife and there are also my children. They are dependent on me. That is the family.

M.: Do the members of the family bind your mind? Or do you bind yourself to them? Do they come and say to you "We form your family. Be with us"? Or do you consider them as your family and that you are bound to them?

D.: I consider them as my family and feel bound to them.

M.: Quite so. Because you think that so-and-so is your wife and so-and-so are your children you also think that you are bound to them.

These thoughts are yours. They owe their very existence to you.

You can entertain these thoughts or relinquish them. The former is bondage and the latter is release.

D.: It is not quite clear to me.

M.: You must exist in order that you may think. You may think these thoughts or other thoughts. The thoughts change but not you. Let go the passing thoughts and hold on to the unchanging Self. The thoughts form your bondage. If they are given up, there is release. The bondage is not external. So no external remedy need be sought for release. It is within your competence to think and thus to get bound or to cease thinking and thus be free.

D.: But it is not easy to remain without thinking.

M.: You need not cease thinking. Only think of the root of the thoughts; seek it and find it. The Self shines by itself. When that is found the thoughts cease of their own accord. That is freedom from bondage.

D.: Yes. I understand it now. I have learnt it now. Is a Guru necessary?

M.: So long as you consider yourself as an individual, a Guru is necessary to show to you that you are not bound by limitations and that your nature is to be free from limitations.

Talk 525.

Another visitor asked: Actions are bondage. One cannot remain without some kind of activity. So bondage goes on increasing. What is one to do under the circumstances?

M.: One should act in such a manner that the bondage is not strengthened but gets weakened. That is selfless action.

3rd October, 1938

Talk 526.

A visitor asked Sri Bhagavan: People give some names to God and say that the name is sacred and repetitions of the name bestow merit on the individual. Can it be true?

M.: Why not? You bear a name to which you answer. But your body was not born with that name written on it, nor did it say to anyone that it bore such and such a name. And yet a name is given to you and you answer to that name, because you have identified yourself

with the name. Therefore the name signifies something and it is not a mere fiction. Similarly, God's name is effective. Repetition of the name is remembrance of what it signifies. Hence its merit.

But the man did not look satisfied. Finally he wanted to retire and prayed for Sri Bhagavan's Grace.

Sri Bhagavan now asked how mere sounds assuring him of Grace would satisfy him unless he had faith.

Both laughed and the visitor retired.

4th October, 1938

Talk 527.

A group of respectable Coorg ladies was in the hall.

One of them asked: I have received a *mantra*. People frighten me saying that it may have unforeseen results if repeated. It is only *Pranava*. So I seek advice. May I repeat it? I have considerable faith in it.

M.: Certainly, it should be repeated with faith.

D.: Will it do by itself? Or can you kindly give me any further instructions?

M.: The object of *mantra japa* is to realise that the same *japa* is already going on in oneself even without effort. The oral *japa* becomes mental and the mental *japa* finally reveals itself as being eternal. That *mantra* is the person's real nature. That is also the state of realisation.

D.: Can the bliss of *samadhi* be gained thus?

M.: The *japa* becomes mental and finally reveals itself as the Self. That is *samadhi*.

D.: Please show Grace to me and strengthen me in my efforts!

13th October, 1938

Talk 528.

A middle-aged Andhra man asked: "Is thought of God necessary for fixing one's sight (or making the mind one-pointed)?"

M.: What is the practice?

D.: To fix the look.

M.: What for?

D.: To gain concentration.

M.: The practice gives work for the eye right enough; but where is the work for the mind in the process?

D.: What should I do for it?

M.: Thought of God, certainly.

D.: Does the practice make one ill?

M.: Maybe. But all will be rightly adjusted of its own accord.

D.: I practised *dhyana* for four hours a day and fixation of sight for two hours. I became ill. Then others said that it was owing to my practice. So I gave up *dhyana*.

M.: Matters will adjust themselves.

D.: Is it not better that the gaze of the eye becomes fixed naturally?

M.: What do you mean?

D.: Is practice necessary to fix the gaze or is it better to leave it to happen of its own accord?

M.: What is practice if it is not an attempt to make something natural? It will become natural after long practice.

D.: Is *pranayama* necessary?

M.: Yes. It is useful.

D.: I did not practise it. But should I undertake it?

M.: Everything will be all right with sufficient strength of mind.

D.: How shall I get the strength of mind?

M.: By *pranayama*.

D.: Is food-regulation also necessary?

M.: It is certainly useful.

D.: Should my contemplation be on the Infinite or the limited being?

M.: What do you mean?

D.: May I contemplate on Sri Krishna or Sri Rama alternately?

M.: Bhavana implies *khanda i.e.*, division.

15th October, 1938

Talk 529.

In the course of conversation Sri Bhagavan said that Thirujnanasambandar had sung in praise of Sri Arunachala. He also mentioned the story briefly as follows:

Jnanasambandar was born in an orthodox family about 1,500 years ago. When he was three years old his father took him to the temple in Shiyali. He left the boy on the bank of the sacred tank and went in to bathe. As he dipped in the water the boy, not finding his father, began to cry out. Immediately Siva and Parvati appeared in a *vimana*. Siva told Parvati to feed the boy with her milk. So she drew out milk in a cup and handed it to the boy. He drank it and was happy.

The father as he came out of the water saw the boy smiling and with streaks of milk round his lips. So he asked the boy what happened to him. The boy did not answer. He was threatened and the boy sang songs. They were hymns in praise of Siva who appeared before him. He sang, "The One with ear-rings... the Robber, who robbed me of my mind...."

He thus became one of the most famous *bhaktas* and was much sought after. He led a vigorous and active life; went on pilgrimage to several places in South India. He got married in his sixteenth year. The bride and the bridegroom went to have *darsan* of God in the local temple soon after the marriage ceremonies were over. A large party went with them. When they reached the temple the place was a blaze of light and the temple was not visible. There was however a passage visible in the blaze of light. Jnanasambandar told the people to enter the passage. They did so. He himself went round the light with his young wife, came to the passage and entered it as the others had done earlier. The Light vanished leaving no trace of those who entered it. The temple again came into view as usual. Such was the brief but very eventful life of the sage.

In one of his tours he had come to Ariyanainallur or Tirukkoilur, eighteen miles from Tiruvannamalai. The place is famous for its Siva temple. (It was here that Sri Bhagavan had that vision of Light on his

way to Tiruvannamalai in his seventeenth year. Sri Bhagavan did not then know that the place was sanctified by the feet of Tirujnanasambandar some fifteen centuries ago.)

When the ancient sage was staying in Ariyanainallur an old man who carried a flower-basket came to him. The young sage asked the old man who he was. The latter replied that he was a servitor of Sri Arunachala the God residing as the Hill here.

Sage: How far is it from here?

The old man: I walk every day from there to here collecting flowers for daily worship. So it is only near.

Sage: Then I shall go with you to that place.

The old man: A rare pleasure, indeed, for me!

They went together, with a large crowd following the Sage. After walking some distance the Sage wanted to ask how much further the place was. But the old man had disappeared in the meantime. Soon after, a gang of dacoits waylaid the pilgrims who surrendered all that they had with them. They plodded their way and reached their destination. The young Sage fell into contemplation. God appeared and said that the dacoits were only His followers and that his needs would be met. Accordingly, the group of pilgrims found all their wants. The Sage had sung hymns in praise of Sri Arunachala. In one of the stanzas, he says:

"You are a dense mass of *jnana*, capable of removing the 'I-am-the-body' idea from Your devotees! Herds of gazelles, of boars and of bears come down Your slopes in the night to search for food on the plains. Herds of elephants go from the plains to Your slopes where they may rest. So different herds of animals meet on Your slopes."

Sri Bhagavan continued: So this Hill must have been a dense forest 1,500 years ago. It has since been denuded of the forests by the wood-cutters, etc., through these several centuries.

The account of Sri Arunachala given by the mysterious old man to Jnanasambandar is contained in 300 *slokas* in Upamanyu's *Bhakta Charita*. One of the Archakas of the temple had it with him and showed it to Sri Bhagavan on the occasion of the temple suit within the last few months. Sri Bhagavan copied the slokas.

Talk 530.

The following is taken from the diary of Annamalai Swami, a good devotee of Sri Bhagavan and resident of Sri Ramanasramam:

The Teachings of Sri Ramana Bhagavan.

(1) That man who is active in the world and yet remains desireless, without losing sight of his own essential nature, is alone a true man.

This was in answer to the Swami who wanted to retire into a cave for practising meditation.

(2) He asked about *sannyas*. Should not a man renounce everything in order that he might get Liberation?

M.: Even better than the man who thinks "I have renounced everything" is the one who does his duty but does not think "I do this" or "I am the doer". Even a *sannyasi* who thinks "I am a *sannyasi*" cannot be a true *sannyasi*, whereas a householder who does not think "I am a householder" is truly a *sannyasi*.

Talk 531.

D.: One person says one thing one way. Another says the same thing in a different way. How is the truth to be ascertained?

M.: Each one sees his own Self only, always and everywhere. He finds the world and God according to what he is.

A Nayanar went to Kalahasti for the *darsan* of God. He saw all the people there as Siva and Sakti because he himself was so. Again, Dharmaputra considered that the whole world was composed of people having some merit or other and that each of them was even better than he himself for some reason or other. Whereas Duryodhana could not find even a single good person in the world. Each reflects his own nature.

Talk 532.

D.: Is there no way of escape from the miseries of the world?

M.: There is only one way and that consists in not losing sight of one's Self under any circumstances.

To enquire "Who am I?" is the only remedy for all the ills of the world. It is also perfect bliss.

Talk 533.

Soon after the announcement in the newspapers that Gandhiji was going to fast for twenty-one days in Yerwada jail, two young men came to Sri Bhagavan; they were very excited.

They said "Mahatma is now fasting for twenty-one days. We want permission from Sri Bhagavan to run up to Yerwada so that we may also fast as long as he does. Please permit us. We are in a haste to go." Saying so they made ready to rush out.

Sri Bhagavan smiled and said, "It is a good sign that you have such feelings. But what can you do now? Get the strength which Gandhiji has already got by his *tapasya*. You will afterwards succeed."

Talk 534.

Sri Bhagavan often used to say, "*Mowna* is the utmost eloquence. Peace is utmost activity. How? Because the person remains in his essential nature and so he permeates all the recesses of the Self. Thus he can call up any power into play whenever or wherever it is necessary. That is the highest *siddhi*."

Annamalai asked: Namadev, Tukaram, Tulsidas and others are said to have seen Maha Vishnu. How did they see Him?

M.: In what manner? Just in the same manner as you see me now and I see you here. They would also have seen Vishnu in this way only.

(He records that, on hearing it, his hairs stood on end and an intense joy overpowered him.)

Talk 535.

Once 'A' asked: How can one be worshipful while engaged in daily work?

Sri Bhagavan did not reply. Ten minutes passed. A few girls came for *darsan* of Sri Bhagavan. They began to sing and dance. Their song was to the effect: "We will churn the milk without losing thought of Krishna."

Sri Bhagavan turned to the Swami and said that there was the reply to his question.

This state is called *Bhakti*, Yoga and Karma.

Talk 536.

The person soaked in the "I-am-the-body" idea is the greatest sinner and he is a suicide. The experience of "I-am-the-Self" is the highest virtue. Even a moment's *dhyana* to that effect is enough to destroy all the *sanchita* Karma. It works like the sun before whom darkness is dispelled. If one remains always in *dhyana*, can any sin, however heinous it be, survive his *dhyana*?

Talk 537.

Once Sri Bhagavan said, "Desire constitutes *maya*, and desirelessness is God."

Talk 538.

'A' asked: What is the exact difference between worldly activity and *dhyana*?

M.: There is no difference. It is like naming one and the same thing by two different words in two different languages. The crow has two eyes but only one iris which is rolled into either eye as it pleases. The trunk of an elephant is used for breathing and for drinking water. The snake sees and hears with the same organ.

Talk 539.

When Sri Bhagavan was going up the hill, the Swami asked: Does the closing or the opening of the eyes make any difference during *dhyana*?

M.: If you strike on a wall with a rubber-ball and you stand at a distance, the ball rebounds and runs back to you. If you stand near the wall, the ball rebounds and runs away from you. Even if the eyes are closed, the mind follows thoughts.

Talk 540.

Once 'A' asked: There is more pleasure in *dhyana* than in sensual enjoyments. Yet the mind runs after the latter and does not seek the former. Why is it so?

M.: Pleasure or pain are aspects of the mind only. Our essential nature is happiness. But we have forgotten the Self and imagine that the body or the mind is the Self. It is that wrong identity that gives rise to

misery. What is to be done? This *vasana* is very ancient and has continued for innumerable past births. Hence it has grown strong. That must go before the essential nature, *viz.*, happiness, asserts itself.

Talk 541.

A certain visitor asked Sri Bhagavan:

There is so much misery in the world because wicked men abound in the world. How can one find happiness here?

M.: All are gurus to us. The wicked say by their evil deeds, "Do not come near me". The good are always good. So then, all persons are like gurus to us.

Talk 542.

'A' asked: I often desire to live in solitude where I can find all I want with ease, so that I may devote all my time to meditation only. Is such a desire good or bad?

M.: Such thoughts will bestow a *janma* (reincarnation) for their fulfilment. What does it matter where and how you are placed? The essential point is that the mind must always remain in its source. There is nothing external which is not also internal. The mind is all. If the mind is active even solitude becomes like a market place. There is no use closing your eyes. Close the mental eye and all will be right. The world is not external to you. The good persons will not care to make plans previous to their actions. Why so? For God who has sent us into the world has His own plan and that will certainly work itself out.

Talk 543.

Many visitors came on one occasion and they all saluted Sri Bhagavan with the single prayer, "Make me a *bhakta*. Give me *moksha*." After they left Sri Bhagavan said, thinking aloud: All of them want *bhakti* and *moksha*. If I say to them, 'Give yourself to me' they will not. How then can they get what they want?

Talk 544.

On one occasion a few devotees were discussing among themselves the relative merits of some famous *bhaktas*. They did not agree among themselves and referred the matter to Sri Bhagavan. He remained silent. The discussion grew hot.

Finally Sri Bhagavan said: One cannot know about another nor can confer bondage or release on another. Each one desires to become famous in the world. It is natural for man. But that desire alone does not bring about the end in view. He who is not accepted by God is certainly humiliated. He who has surrendered himself, body and mind, to God becomes famous all over the world.

Talk 545.

'A' was once badly distracted by sexual thoughts.

He fought against them. He fasted three days and prayed to God so that he might be free from such thoughts. Finally, he decided to ask Sri Bhagavan about it.

Sri Bhagavan listened to him and remained silent for about two minutes. Then He said: Well, the thoughts distracted you and you fought against them. That is good. Why do you continue to think of them now? Whenever such thoughts arise, consider to whom they arise and they will flee away from you.

Talk 546.

'A' asked: A person does something good but he sometimes suffers pain even in his right activities. Another does something wicked but is also happy. Why should it be so?

M.: Pain or pleasure is the result of past Karma and not of the present Karma. Pain and pleasure alternate with each other. One must suffer or enjoy them patiently without being carried away by them. One must always try to hold on to the Self. When one is active one should not care for the results and must not be swayed by the pain or pleasure met with occasionally. He who is indifferent to pain or pleasure can alone be happy.

Talk 547.

D.: What is the significance of Guru's Grace in the attainment of liberation?

M.: Liberation is not anywhere outside you. It is only within. If a man is anxious for Deliverance, the Guru within pulls him in and the Guru without pushes him into the Self. This is the Grace of the Guru.

Talk 548.

A visitor asked Sri Bhagavan (in writing) the following questions: (1) Were the differences in the world simultaneous, with creation? Or are they of later growth? (2) Is the Creator impartial? Then why is one born lame, another blind, and so on? (3) Are the eight Dikpalas, thirty-three crores of gods and the seven *rishis* existent even today?

M.: Refer these questions to yourself and the answer will be found.

After a pause, Sri Bhagavan continued: if we first know our Self then all other matters will be plain to us. Let us know our Self and then enquire concerning the Creator and creation. Without first knowing the Self, to seek knowledge of God, etc., is ignorance. A man suffering from jaundice sees everything yellow. If he tells others that all things are yellow who will accept his statement?

The creation is said to have an origin. How? Like a tree and the seed from which it has grown. How was the seed produced? From a similar tree. Where is the end to the series of questions? Therefore one must know one's Self before the world is known.

Talk 549.

Sri Bhagavan often speaks of *namaskar* (prostration) in the following strain: "This *namaskar* was originally meant by the ancient sages to serve as a means of surrender to God. The act still prevails but not the spirit behind it. The doer of *namaskar* intends to deceive the object of worship by his act. It is mostly insincere and deceitful. It is meant to cover up innumerable sins. Can God be deceived? The man thinks that God accepts his *namaskar* and that he himself is free to continue his old life. They need not come to me. I am not pleased with these *namaskars*. The people should keep their minds clean; instead of that they bend themselves or lie prostrate before me. I am not deceived by such acts."

Talk 550.

Somerset Maugham, a well-known English author, was on a visit to Sri Bhagavan. He also went to see Maj. Chadwick in his room and there he suddenly became unconscious. Maj. Chadwick requested Sri Bhagavan to see him. Sri Bhagavan went into the room, took a seat and gazed on Mr. Maugham. He regained his senses and saluted Sri

Bhagavan. They remained silent and sat facing each other for nearly an hour. The author attempted to ask questions but did not speak. Maj. Chadwick encouraged him to ask. Sri Bhagavan said, "All finished. Heart-talk is all talk. All talk must end in silence only." They smiled and Sri Bhagavan left the room.

Talk 551.

A man asked Sri Bhagavan: "How is it that *Atma vidya* is said to be the easiest?"

M.: Any other *vidya* requires a knower, knowledge and the object to be known, whereas this does not require any of them. It is the Self. Can anything be so obvious as that? Hence it is the easiest. All that you need do is to enquire, "Who am I?"

A man's true name is *mukti* (liberation)

Talk 552.

There are some buildings in the Asramam. They used to have some plan which somehow could not be followed in entirety. Therefore 'A' and the Sarvadhikari did not agree on many details and there used to be trouble between them. 'A' was once highly disgusted with the state of affairs. He asked Sri Bhagavan what could be done under the circumstances.

Sri Bhagavan said: "Which of the buildings was according to a plan made by these people here? God has His own plans and all these go on according to that. No one need worry as to what happens."

Talk 553.

The Asramites once asked Sri Bhagavan, "How were we all in our previous births? Why do we not know our own past?"

M.: God in His mercy has withheld this knowledge from people. If they knew that they were virtuous, they will grow proud; contrariwise they will be depressed. Both are bad. It is enough that one knows the Self.

Talk 554.

M.: Just as a river does not continue its flow after its discharge into the ocean, so also a person loses all movements after he merges in the Self.

Talk 555.

Sri Bhagavan once recounted how Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni asked Him: My own opinion is that a man can live on Rs. 3 a month. What is Sri Bhagavan's opinion in the matter?

M.: A man can live happily only if he knows that he requires nothing wherewith to live.

Talk 556.

Maj. Chadwick asked Sri Bhagavan one night: The world is said to become manifest after the mind becomes manifest. There is no mind when I sleep. Is the world not existent to others at that time? Does it not show that the world is the product of a universal mind? How then shall we say that the world is not material but only dream-like?

M.: The world does not tell you that it is of the individual mind or of the universal mind. It is only the individual mind that sees the world. When this mind disappears the world also disappears.

There was a man who saw in his dream his father who had died thirty years earlier. Furthermore he dreamt that he had four more brothers and that his father divided his property among them. A quarrel ensued, the brothers assaulted the man and he woke up in a fright. Then he remembered that he was all alone, he had no brothers and the father was dead long ago. His fright gave place to contentment. So you see - when we see our Self there is no world, and when we lose sight of the Self we get ourselves bound in the world.

Talk 557.

A visitor asked: "We are advised to concentrate on the spot in the forehead between the eyebrows. Is it right?"

M.: Everyone is aware, 'I am'. Leaving aside that awareness one goes about in search of God. What is the use of fixing one's attention between the eyebrows? It is mere folly to say that God is between the eyebrows. The aim of such advice is to help the mind to concentrate. It is one of the forcible methods to check the mind and prevent its dissipation. It is forcibly directed into one channel. It is a help to concentration.

But the best means of realisation is the enquiry "Who am I?" The present trouble is to the mind and it must be removed by the mind only.

D.: Are there restrictions to be observed in food?

M.: Sattva food taken in moderation.

D.: There are several *asanas* mentioned. Which of them is the best?

M.: Nididhyasana (one-pointedness of the mind) is the best.

Talk 558.

A visitor asked: "Sri Bhagavan! When I heard of you, a strong desire arose in me to see you. Why should it be so?"

M.: The desire arose in the same way as the body arises to the Self.

D.: What is the purpose of life?

M.: To seek to know the significance of life is itself the result of good karma in past births. Those who do not seek such knowledge are simply wasting their lives.

Talk 559.

A man asked Sri Bhagavan: "Sri Bhagavan can know when I shall become a *jnani*. Please tell me when it will be."

M.: If I am Bhagavan then there is no one apart from me to whom *jnana* should arise or to whom I should speak. If I am an ordinary man like others then I am as ignorant as the rest. Either way your question cannot be answered.

Talk 560.

When Sri Bhagavan was taking His bath a few *bhaktas* were around Him, speaking to themselves. Then they asked Him about the use of *ganja* (hashish). Sri Bhagavan had finished His bath by that time. He said: "Oh *ganja*! The users feel immensely happy when they are under its influence. How shall I describe their happiness! They simply shout *ananda! ananda* ..." Saying so, He walked as if tipsy. The *bhaktas* laughed. He appeared as if He stumbled, placed His hands round 'A' and cried "*ananda! ananda!*"

'A' records that his very being was transformed from that time. He had remained an inmate for the past eight years. He further says that his mind now remains at peace.

Talk 561.

D.: What is *svarupa* (form) and *arupa* (formless) of the mind?

M.: When you wake up from sleep a light appears, that is the light of the Self passing through *Mahat tattva*. It is called cosmic consciousness. That is *arupa*. The light falls on the ego and is reflected therefrom. Then the body and the world are seen. This mind is *svarupa*. The objects appear in the light of this reflected consciousness. This light is called *jyoti*.

21st October, 1938

Talk 562.

There is a statement in the book *Vichara Sangraha* that though a person realises the Self once, he cannot, for that simple reason alone, become a *mukta*. He continues to remain a victim of *vasanas* (latencies). Sri Bhagavan was asked whether the realisation referred to was the same as the *jnani's*, and if so why there should be a difference in their effects.

M.: The experience is the same. Every person experiences the Self consciously or unconsciously. The *ajnani's* experience is clouded by his latencies whereas the *jnani's* is not so. The *jnani's* experience of the Self is therefore distinct and permanent.

A practiser may by long practice gain a glimpse of the Reality. This experience may be vivid for the time being. And yet he will be distracted by the old *vasanas* and so his experience will not avail him. Such a man must continue his *manana* and *nididhyasana* so that all the obstacles may be destroyed. He will then be able to remain permanently in the Real State.

D.: What is the difference between a man who makes no attempts and remains an *ajnani*, and another who gains a glimpse and returns to *ajnana*?

M.: In the latter case a stimulus is always present to goad him on to further efforts until the realisation is perfect.

D.: The *Srutis* say: *Sakrit vibhatoyam brahmaloka* (This knowledge of Brahman shines forth once and forever).

M.: They refer to the permanent realisation and not to the glimpse.

D.: How is it possible that a man forgets his very experience and falls back into ignorance?

Sri Bhagavan illustrated it with the following story:

There was a king who treated his subjects well. One of his ministers gained his confidence and misused the influence. All the other ministers and officers were adversely affected and they hit upon a plan to get rid of him. They instructed the guards not to let the man enter the palace. The king noted his absence and enquired after him. He was informed that the man was taken ill and could not therefore come to the palace. The king deputed his physician to attend on the minister. False reports were conveyed to the king that the minister was sometimes improving and at other times collapsing. The king desired to see the patient. But the pandits said that such an action was against *dharma*. Later the minister was reported to have died. The king was very sorry when he heard the news.

The arrogant minister was kept informed of all the happenings by spies of his own. He tried to foil the other ministers. He waited for the king to come out of the palace so that he might report himself to the king. On one occasion he climbed up a tree, hid himself among the branches and awaited the king. The king came out that night in the palanquin and the man in hiding jumped down in front of the palanquin and shouted his identity. The companion of the king was equally resourceful. He at once took out a handful of sacred ashes (*vibhuti*) from his pocket and scattered it in the air so that the king was obliged to close his eyes. The companion shouted victory ('*jai*') to the king and ordered the band to play so that the other man's shout was drowned in the noise. He also ordered the palanquin-bearers to move fast and he himself sang incantations to keep off evil spirits. The king was thus left under the impression that the dead man's ghost was playing pranks with him.

The disappointed man became desperate and retired into the forest for *tapasya* (austerities). After a long time the king happened to go hunting. He came across the former minister seated in deep contemplation. But he hastened away from the spot lest the ghost should molest him.

The moral of the story is that even though the man was seen in flesh and blood, yet the wrong notion that he was a ghost prevented right values being taken. So it is with a forced realisation of the Self.

22nd October, 1938

Talk 563.

A group of people came on a visit to Sri Bhagavan. One of them asked: "How can I keep my mind aright?"

M.: A refractory bull is lured to the stall by means of grass. Similarly the mind must be lured by good thoughts.

D.: But it does not remain steady.

M.: The bull accustomed to stray takes delight in going astray. However he must be lured with luscious grass to the stall. Even so he will continue to trespass into the neighbour's fields. He must gradually be made to realise that the same kind of good grass can be had in his own place. After a time he will remain in the stall without straying. Later a time will come when, even if driven out of the stall, he will return to the stall without going into the neighbouring fields. So also the mind must be trained to take to right ways. It will gradually grow accustomed to good ways and will not return to wrong ways.

D.: What are the good ways to be shown to the mind?

M.: Thought of God.

23rd to 26th October, 1938

Talk 564.

Pandit Bala Kak Dhar, a jagirdar from Kashmir, had come all the way from Srinagar to have *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan on Deepavali Day. He gave a bundle of papers to Sri Bhagavan containing an account of his life and position. His talks with Sri Bhagavan were all of them personal.

One of his questions was: "Now that I have had the *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan and it is enough for me, may I throw away all the charms, *tantras* and *pujas* into the river?"

M.: Daily *puja* as prescribed in the *Dharma sastras* is always good. It is for the purification of the mind. Even if one feels oneself too advanced to need such *puja*, still it must be performed for the sake of others. Such action will be an example to one's children and other dependents.

Talk 565.

A gentleman from Mysore asked: How is the mind to be kept in the right way?

M.: By practice. Give it good thoughts. The mind must be trained in good ways.

D.: But it is not steady.

M.: The Bhagavad Gita says: *Sanaissanairuparamet* (The mind must gradually be brought to a standstill); *Atma samstham manah krtva* (making the mind inhere in the Self); *Abhyasa-vairagyabhyam* (by practice and dispassion).

Practice is necessary. Progress will be slow.

D.: What is the Self referred to in *Atma samstham* (fixing it in the Self)?

M.: Do you not know your Self? You certainly exist. Or do you deny your existence? The question may arise "Who is this Self", only if you do not exist, but you cannot ask anything unless you exist at the same time. Your question shows that you exist. Find out who you are. That is all.

D.: I have read many books. But my mind does not turn to the Self.

M.: Because the Self is not in the books; but it is in you. Reading books makes one learned. That is its purpose and it is fulfilled.

D.: What is Atma *sakshatkara* (Self-Realisation)?

M.: You are the Atma (Self) and that *sakshat* (here and now) also. Where is the place for *kara* (accomplishment) in it? This question shows that you think you are the non-Self. Or you think that there are two selves, the one to realise the other. It is absurd.

That you identify yourself with the gross body lies at the root of this question. Well, this question arises now. Did it arise in your sleep? Did you not exist then? Certainly you did exist in sleep. What is the difference between these two states that the question should arise now but not in sleep? Now you think that you are the body. You see things around you and you want to see the Self in a similar manner. Such is the force of habit. The senses are mere instruments of perception. *You* are the seer. Remain as the seer only. What else is there to see? Such is the state in deep sleep.

Therefore this question does not arise then.

Atma *sakshatkara* (Self-Realisation) is thus only *anatma nirasana* (giving up the non-Self).

D.: Is there only one Self or are there more selves?

M.: This is again due to confusion; you identify the body with the Self. You think: "Here I am; here he is, there is another; and so on". You find many bodies and think they are so many selves. But did you ask in your sleep "I am sleeping here, how many are there who are awake?" Does any question arise, for the matter of that? Why does it not arise? Because you are only one and there are not many.

D.: What is my *tattva* (truth)?

M.: You are yourself the *tattva*. Is there a different one to know the *tattva* of another? How can you exist apart from the *tattva*? The very fact of your existence makes you ask this question. Your very existence is the *tattva*. Give up the habiliments of the *tattva* and remain in your essential nature. All the Scriptures tell you only not to waste your efforts in non-truth - non-*tattva*. Give up the non-*tattva*. Then *tattva* remains always shining pure and single.

D.: I want to know my *tattva* and my duties.

M.: Know your *tattva* first and then you may ask what your duties are. You must exist in order to know and do your duty. Realise your existence and then enquire of your duties.

26th October, 1938

Talk 566.

There is a Tamil paper *Arya Dharmam*. An article on *Vairagyam* appeared in it. Sri Bhagavan read it out in answer to a question. The article was briefly as follows:

vairagya = *vi* + *raga* = *vigataraga* (non-attachment).

Vairagya is possible only for the wise. However, it is often misapplied by the common folk. For instance, a man often says "I have determined not to go to cinema shows." He calls it *vairagya*. Such wrong interpretation of the words and old sayings are not uncommon.

Again we often hear, “Dog seen, stone is not seen; stone seen, dog is not seen.” It is ordinarily understood to mean that one cannot find a brickbat to throw at a stray dog. But this popular saying has a much deeper significance. It is based on a story:

A certain wealthy man’s house was closely guarded. It had also a ferocious dog chained to a pillar at the gate. The dog and the chain were however very skilful pieces of art. They were sculptured in stone but appeared life-like. A pedestrian on the road once took fright at the sight of the ferocious animal and hurt himself in his attempt to dodge it. A kindly neighbour took pity on him and showed him that it was not a living dog. When the man passed by it the next time he admired the skill of the sculptor and forgot his old experience. Thus when he found it to be a dog, he could not see the stone of which it was made; and again when he found it a piece of sculpture he did not see any dog to hurt him. Hence the proverb. Compare it with ‘The elephant hides the wood and the wood hides the elephant.’ Here it is a wooden elephant.

Atma is always *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Of these, the first two are experienced in all the states, whereas the last one is said to be experienced in sleep only.

The question arises how the true nature of the Self can be lost in the waking and dream states. It is, really speaking, not lost. In sleep there is no mind and the Self shines as Itself, whereas in the other two states what shines forth is the reflected light of the Self. *Ananda* is felt after the cessation of thoughts in sleep. It is also manifest on other occasions as love, joy, etc., *priya*, *moda* and *pramoda*. But they are all *chitta vrittis* (modes of mind).

When a man is walking in the street his mind is full of fleeting thoughts. Suppose he passes a bazaar where some fine mangoes are for sale. He likes the mangoes and purchases them. He is next anxious to taste them. So he hastens home and eats them and feels happy. When the fleeting thoughts give way to the pleasure at the sight of mangoes, it is *priya*, when he gets them as his own, the pleasure is *moda*; lastly, when he eats them, the pleasure is *pramoda*.

All the three kinds of pleasure are owing to the disappearance of other thoughts.

3rd to 6th November, 1938

Talk 567.

Sri Bhagavan explained to Mr. MacIver the first few stanzas of *Sad Vidya* as follows:

1. The first stanza is the auspicious beginning. Why should the subject-matter of the piece be brought in here? Can knowledge be other than Being? Being is the core - the Heart. How then is the Supreme Being to be contemplated and glorified? Only to remain as the Pure Self is the auspicious beginning. This speaks of attributeless Brahman according to the *jnana marga* (method of knowledge).

2. The second stanza is in praise of God with attributes. In the foregoing, to be as one Self is mentioned; in the present one, surrender to the Lord of all.

Furthermore the second indicates (1) the fit reader (2) the subject-matter (3) the relationship and (4) the fruit. The fit reader is the one who is competent for it. Competence consists in non-attachment to the world and desire to be liberated.

All know that they must die some time or other; but they do not think deeply of the matter. All have a fear of death: such fear is momentary. Why fear death? Because of the 'I-am-the-body' idea. All are fully aware of the death of the body and its cremation. That the body is lost in death is well-known. Owing to the I-am-the-body notion, death is feared as being the loss of Oneself. Birth and death pertain to the body only; but they are superimposed on the Self, giving rise to the delusion that birth and death relate to the Self.

In the effort to overcome birth and death man looks up to the Supreme Being to save him. Thus are born faith and devotion to the Lord. How to worship Him? The creature is powerless and the Creator is All-powerful. How to approach Him? To entrust oneself to His care is the only thing left for him; total surrender is the only way. Therefore he surrenders himself to God. Surrender consists in giving up oneself and one's possessions to the Lord of Mercy. Then what is left over for the man? Nothing - neither himself nor his possessions. The body liable to be born and to die having been made over to the Lord, the man need no

longer worry about it. Then birth and death cannot strike terror. The cause of fear was the body; it is no longer his; why should he fear now? Or where is the identity of the individual to be frightened?

Thus the Self is realised and Bliss results. This is then the subject-matter: freedom from misery and gain of Happiness. This is the highest good to be gained. Surrender is synonymous with Bliss itself. This is the relationship.

Fruit is to reflect on the subject-matter and gain Knowledge which is ever-present, here and now. The stanza ends with "the immortal ones."

3. The five senses mean the subtle functions (*tanmatras*), namely, hearing, touch, seeing, taste and smell. Variations of these form the whole universe; they vary according to the three *gunas* as follows:

by *tamas* (dullness) the gross elements;
by *rajas* (activity) the instruments for knowing objects;
by *sattva* (clearness) the different kinds of knowledge of the senses; also
by *tamas* - the gross objects *i.e.*, the world;
by *rajas* - the vital airs and the *karmendriyas*
by *sattva* - the sense organs of perception (*jnanendriyas*).

Karmendriyas are organs of holding, walking, speech, evacuation and reproduction.

Now consider the ringing of the bell; the sound is related to hearing; the bell is the object, the modification of *tamoguna*. The *rajasic tanmatras*, changing as the vibrations of sound, extend round the bell, then as ether get connected with the ear in order to be felt as sound. The knowledge recognising it as sound is the *sattva tanmatra*.

So also the other senses: Touch (*vayu*) - air *tanmatra*; form (*rupa*) - *tejas tanmatra*; taste (*ap*) - water *tanmatra*; smell (*prithvi*) - earth *tanmatra*.

To understand the *tanmatras* as the subtlest particles of matter is not right, for it is incomplete. They are only the subtle forms of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell, which form the whole components of the universe. Such is the creation of the world.

For want of proper terminology these ideas cannot be rightly expressed in foreign languages.

4. This stanza says that all are agreed on one point. What is it? The state beyond duality and non-duality, beyond subject and object, beyond *jiva* and God, in short, beyond all differences. It is free from ego. "How to reach it?" is the question. By giving up the world, it says. Here "the world" stands for thoughts relating to it. If such thoughts do not arise, the ego does not rise up. There will be no subject nor object. Such is the state.

Talk 568.

Mr. V. G. Sastri showed a cutting to Sri Bhagavan. It contained some prophecy of Sri Rama Tirtha that India would reach the full height of her former glory before 1950 AD

Sri Bhagavan said: Why should we think that India is not already in the height of her glory? The glory is in your thought.

7th November, 1938

Talk 569.

In reply to Sri K. L. Sarma, Sri Bhagavan spoke about *Dakshinamurti stotra* as follows:

I originally intended to write a commentary on it. Mr. Ranganatha Iyer took away my Tamil version of the *stotra* and printed it along with *Appalapattu*. He later asked me to enlarge it. I had the introduction ready. He saw it and took it away for printing. I did not proceed with the work. As for the *stotra:*

Brahma, the creator, created four sons from his mind. They were Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanathkumara and Sanatsujata. They asked their creator why they were brought into existence. Brahma said: "I must create the universe. But I want to go to do *tapas* for realising the Self. You are brought forth in order that you may create the universe. That will be by multiplying yourselves." They did not like the idea. They wondered why they should take the trouble on themselves. It is natural for one to seek the source. They therefore wanted to regain their source and be happy. So they did not obey the commands of Brahma but left him. They desired guidance for realisation of the Self. They were the best equipped individuals for Self-Realisation. Guidance should be only from the best of Masters. Who could it be but Siva - the *yogiraja*. Siva appeared before them sitting under the sacred banyan tree. Being *yogiraja*

should He practise yoga? He went into *samadhi* as He sat; He was in Perfect Repose. Silence prevailed. They saw Him. The effect was immediate. They fell into *samadhi* and their doubts were at an end.

Silence is the true *upadesa*. It is the perfect *upadesa*. It is suited only for the most advanced seeker. The others are unable to draw full inspiration from it. Therefore they require words to explain the Truth. But Truth is beyond words. It does not admit of explanation. All that is possible to do is only to indicate It. How is that to be done?

The people are under an illusion. If the spell is removed they will realise the Truth. They must be told to realise the falsity of the illusion. Then they will try to escape its snares. *Vairagya* will result. They will enquire into the Truth, *i.e.*, seek the Self. That will make them abide as the Self. Sri Sankara, being the *avatar* of Siva, was full of compassion for fallen beings. He wanted all of them to realise their blissful Self. He could not reach them all with His Silence. So he composed the *Dakshinamurti stotra* in the form of a hymn so that people might read it and understand the Truth.

What is the nature of the illusion? All are in the grip of enjoyment, *i.e.*, *bhokta, bhogyam, bhoga*. This is due to the wrong notion that *bhogya vastu* (the objects) are real. The ego, the world and the creator are the fundamentals underlying the illusion. If they are known to be not apart from the Self there will be no more illusion.

The first four stanzas deal with the world. It is shown to be the same as the Master whose Self is that of the seeker also, or the Master to whom the seeker surrenders himself. The second four stanzas deal with the individual whose Self is shown to be the Self of the Master. The ninth stanza deals with Isvara and the tenth with the *siddhi* or Realisation. Such is the scheme of the *stotra*.

Which is the *darpana* (mirror) here? A mirror, as we know it, is an insentient object which reflects light. What corresponds to a mirror in an individual? The light of the Self-luminous Self is reflected on the *Mahatattva*. The reflected light is the mind-ether or the pure mind. This illumines the *vasanas* (latencies) of the individual and hence the sense of ‘I’ and ‘this’ arises.

Again, a superficial reading of the *slokas* makes one believe that the bondage, liberation, etc., are all related to the Master *i.e.*, Sri Dakshinamurti. It is absurd. Surrender to Him is meant.

Talk 570.

A visitor: Nirguna upasana is said to be difficult and risky. He quoted the verse from Sri Bhagavad Gita, *avyaktahi* etc. (the manifest, etc.)

M.: What is manifest is considered to be unmanifest and doubt is created. Can anything be more immediate and intimate than the Self? Can anything be more plain?

D.: Saguna upasana seems easier.

M.: Do what is easy for you.

Talk 571.

Multiplicity of individuals is a moot point with most persons. A *jiva* is only the light reflected on the ego. The person identifies himself with the ego and argues that there must be more like him. He is not easily convinced of the absurdity of his position. Does a man who sees many individuals in his dream persist in believing them to be real and enquire after them when he wakes up?

This argument does not convince the disputant.

Again, there is the moon. Let anyone look at her from any place at any time; she is the same moon. Everyone knows it. Now suppose that there are several receptacles of water reflecting the moon. The images are all different from one another and from the moon herself. If one of the receptacles falls to pieces, that reflection disappears. Its disappearance does not affect the real moon or the other reflections. It is similar with an individual attaining Liberation. He alone is liberated.

The sectarian of multiplicity makes this his argument against non-duality. "If the Self is single, if one man is liberated, that means that all souls are liberated. In practice it is not so. Therefore *Advaita* is not correct."

The weakness in the argument is that the reflected light of the Self is mistaken for the original Light of the Self. The ego, the world and the individuals are all due to the person's *vasanas*. When they perish, that person's hallucinations disappear, that is to say one pitcher is broken and the relative reflection is at an end.

The fact is that the Self is never bound. There can therefore be no Release for It. All the troubles are for the ego only.

10th November, 1938

A question was asked why it was wrong to say that there is a multiplicity of *jivas*. *Jivas* are certainly many. For a *jiva* is only the ego and forms the reflected light of the Self. Multiplicity of selves may be wrong but not of *jivas*.

M.: Jiva is called so because he sees the world. A dreamer sees many *jivas* in a dream but all of them are not real. The dreamer alone exists and he sees all. So it is with the individual and the world. There is the creed of only one Self which is also called the creed of only one *jiva*. It says that the *jiva* is only one who sees the whole world and the *jivas* therein.

D.: Then *jiva* means the Self here.

M.: So it is. But the Self is not a seer. But here he is said to see the world. So he is differentiated as the *Jiva*.

Talk 572.

D.: Of what use is the fear of death which is common to all?

M.: True, it is common to all. Such fear serves no useful purpose because being overpowered by the latent tendencies of the mind the man dies a natural death. It does not lead him to non-attachment and he cannot investigate the matter.

D.: How then are you giving the same instruction without distinction to visitors?

M.: What do I say? The ego in each one must die. Let him reflect on it. Is there this ego or is there not? By repeated reflection one becomes more and more fit.

11th November, 1938

Talk 573.

Mr. Ranganatha Ayyar, a devotee of fourteen years' standing, is on a visit here. He asked: How long is the interval between one's death and reincarnation?

M.: It may be long or short. But a *jnani* does not have any such changes; he merges into the universal Being, so says the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

Some say that those who after death pass into the path of light are not reborn, whereas those who after death take the path of darkness are reborn after they have enjoyed the fruits of karma in their subtle bodies.

If one's merits and demerits are equal, they are directly reborn here. Merits outweighing demerits, the subtle bodies go to heavens and are then reborn here; demerits outweighing merits, they go to hells and are afterwards reborn here.

A *yogabrashta* is said to fare in the same manner. All these are described in the *sastras*. But in fact, there is neither birth nor death. One remains only as what one really is. This is the only Truth.

Talk 574.

D.: What are *asanas* (postures or seats)? Are they necessary?

M.: Many *asanas* with their effects are mentioned in the Yoga *sastras*. The seats are the tiger-skin, grass, etc.; the postures are the 'lotus posture', the 'easy posture' and so on.

Why all these - only to know oneself? "I am the body; the body requires a seat; it is the earth," thinking thus, he seeks seats. But in sleep did he think of the support or the bed: the bed on the cot and the cot on the earth? Did he not exist in sleep too? How was he then?

The truth is - Being the Self, the ego rising up, confusing himself with the body, mistaking the world to be real, differentiating the objects, covered by the ignorance of the 'I'-conceit, he thinks wildly and also looks for seats. He does not understand that he himself is the Centre of all and thus forms the basis for all.

If questioned he talks of the effects of seats and footwear in terms of gravitation, magnetism and so on. Without them he imagines that the power of his austerities will dwindle away.

Wherefrom do they all derive their power? He looks to the effects, seeks their causes and imagines them to be the power of seats and of footwear. A stone thrown up falls back to the ground. Why? Owing to the gravitation, says he. Well - are all these different from his thoughts? Think and say if the stone, the earth and gravity are different from his thoughts. They are all in his mind only. He is the Power and the wielder of it. He is the Centre of all and their support. He is also the Seat.

The seat is meant to make him sit firm. Where and how can he remain firm except in his own real state? This is the Seat.

Talk 575.

D.: How to conquer desire, anger, etc.?

M.: Desire or lust, anger, etc., give you pain. Why? Because of the 'I'-conceit; this 'I'-conceit is from ignorance; ignorance from differentiation; differentiation from the notion of the reality of the world and this again from 'I-am-the-body' idea. The last can be only after the rise of the ego. The ego not arising, the whole chain of mishaps disappears. Therefore prevent the rise of the ego. This can be done by remaining in your own real nature; then lust, anger, etc., are conquered.

D.: So then all these have their root in ignorance.

M.: Quite so. Ignorance gives rise to error, error to conceit, etc. What is ignorance? Can it be of Pure Brahman which is only the Self or Pure Knowledge? Only let the questioner know his own Self, *i.e.*, be the Knowledge; this question will not arise. Because of ignorance he raises the question. Such ignorance is of the questioner and not of the Self. The sun seen, no darkness persists.

There is hoarded wealth in an iron safe. The man says it is his own; the safe does not say so. It is the ownership-conceit that is responsible for the claim.

Nothing is independent of the Self, not even ignorance; for ignorance is only the power of the Self, remaining there without affecting It. However it affects the 'I'-conceit, *i.e.*, the *jiva*. Therefore ignorance is of the *jiva*.

How? The man says, "I do not know myself." Are there then two selves - one the subject and the other the object? He cannot admit it. Is then ignorance at an end for him? No. The rise of the ego is itself the ignorance and nothing more.

Talk 576.

Sutra Bhashya:—

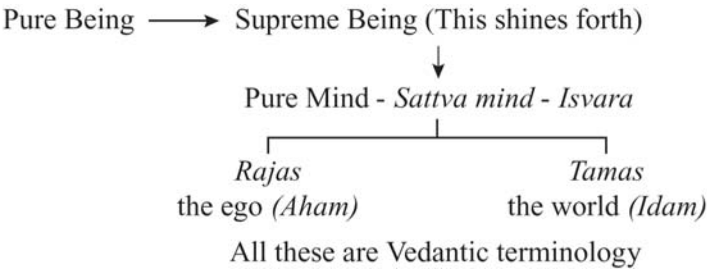
The *sutras* are meant to elucidate and establish the meanings of the texts. The commentaries try to do so by bringing in the opponent's views, refuting them and arriving at conclusions after long discussions; there are also differences of opinion in the same school of thought;

again protagonists and antagonists. Also different schools of thought interpret the same text in different ways and arrive at different conclusions, contrary to each other.

How then is the purpose of the *sutras* served?

15th November, 1938

Talk 577.



Talk 578.

Coming here, some people do not ask about themselves. They ask:

"Does the sage, liberated while alive (*Jivanmukta*), see the world? Is he affected by Karma?

What is liberation after being disembodied? Is one liberated only after being disembodied or even while alive in the body? Should the body of the sage resolve itself in light or disappear from view in any other manner? Can he be liberated though the body is left behind as a corpse?"

Their questions are endless. Why worry oneself in so many ways? Does liberation consist in knowing these?

Therefore I say to them, "Leave liberation alone. Is there bondage? Know this. See yourself first and foremost."

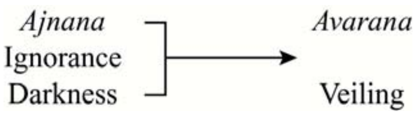
Talk 579.

Avarana (veiling) does not hide the *jiva* in entirety; he knows that he is; only he does not know who he is. He sees the world; but not that it is only Brahman. It is light in darkness (or knowledge in ignorance).

In a cinema show the room is first darkened, artificial light is introduced; only in this light are the pictures projected.

For differentiation a reflected light is thus necessary. A sleeper dreams, he is not out of sleep: only in the darkness or ignorance of sleep can he see the unreal dream objects.

Similarly the darkness of ignorance gives rise to the knowledge of the perceptions of the world.



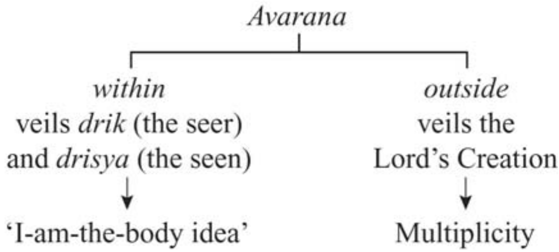
This veiling is a characteristic of ignorance; it is not of the Self: it cannot affect the Self in any manner; it can veil only the *jiva*.

The ego is insentient: united with the light from the Self, it is called *jiva*. But the ego and the light cannot be seen distinct from each other; they are always united together. The mixed product is the *jiva*, the root of all differentiation. All these are spoken of to satisfy the questioners.

Sahasrara (cranium)	Ether = *Jnana*
Kantham (throat)	Air = Mind
Hridaya (Heart)	Light = Intellect
Nabhi (navel)	Water = Memory
Mula (Solar plexus)	Earth = The Ego

Such is the representation of the subtle body. The senses and other organs act separately, whereas the inner organs and the vital airs can work only in unison. Therefore the former are *vyashti* (individualistic) and the latter are *samashti* (collective).

Avarana (veiling) gives rise to two kinds of veiling.



Jiva is not independent of *Isvara*; nor ignorance of *maya*. Only on waking up from sleep, the man perceives the body and the world, but not in sleep. On the strength of the present knowledge he understands that he remained in deep sleep also. Therefore in sleep *jiva* must be concluded to be in pure state in which the body and the world are not perceived.

D.: Is not *jiva* the reflected light, the 'I-thought'?

M.: He is also a *jiva*; before it also he is *jiva*; the one of them is related to the other as cause and effect. The sleeper *jiva* cannot be independent of *Isvara*. On waking he says "I am the body". If all the worlds together form *virat*, the body is a tiny dot in it. Thus the body is in and of *virat*. What belongs to the *jiva* then? Only the conceit makes him claim the body as himself but not the others. He cannot be independent of *virat*. Similarly,

(1) *Isvara*

(Causal Cosmic Being) → *Prajna* (individual being in deep sleep)

(2) *Hiranyagarbha*

(Causal Subtle Being) → *Taijasa* (individual subtle being)

(3) *Virat*

(Causal gross Being) → *Visva* (individual gross being)

(4) *Maya*

(Causal Ignorance adjunct to *Isvara*) → Ignorance adjunct to *Jiva*

(5) *Brahman*

(Cause) → *Jiva* (Effect)

They say that all these five groups should be unified. This they call the unity of the Five. All these are only polemics!

17th November, 1938

Talk 580.

A party from Rajkot came in a bus. They consisted of four chiefs and four ladies with attendants and a bodyguard. They arrived at 11 a.m. After lunch in their room, they had a short conversation at 12-45 p.m. and left at 1-15 p.m.

One of them said: Here is the mother of the Thakore Saheb. We have come a long distance for the *darshan* of Sri Maharshi. Will He kindly give us some instructions?

Sri Bhagavan smiled and answered: Good that they have come such a long distance for the sake of *darshan*. It is enough that they have said it. What is there for me to say? (Lunch bell).

At 12-45 p.m.

O.: Is a *jnani* different from a *yogi*? What is the difference?

M.: Srimad Bhagavad Gita says that a *jnani* is the true yogi and also a true *bhakta*. Yoga is only a *sadhana* and *jnana* is the *siddhi*.

D.: Is yoga necessary?

M.: It is a *sadhana*. It will not be necessary after *jnana* is attained. All the *sadhanas* are called yogas, *e.g.*, Karma yoga; *Bhakti* yoga; *Jnana* yoga; *Ashtanga* yoga. What is yoga? Yoga means 'union'. Yoga is possible only when there is '*viyoga*' (separation). The person is now under the delusion of *viyoga*. This delusion must be removed. The method of removing it is called yoga.

D.: Which method is the best?

M.: It depends upon the temperament of the individual. Every person is born with the *samskaras* of past lives. One of the methods will be found easy for one person and another method for another. There is no definiteness about it.

D.: How is one to meditate?

M.: What is meditation? It is commonly understood to be concentration on a single thought. Other thoughts are kept out at that time. The single thought also must vanish at the right time. Thought-free consciousness is the goal.

D.: How is the ego to be got rid of?

M.: The ego must be held in order to get rid of it. Hold it first and the rest will be easy.

D.: How is that to be held?

M.: Do you mean to say that there is one ego to hold another ego or to eliminate the other? Are there two egos?

D.: How shall I pray to God?

M.: There-must be 'I' who prays to God. 'I' is certainly immediate and intimate, whereas God is not thought so. Find out that which is more intimate and then the other may be ascertained and prayed to if necessary.

19th November, 1938

Talk 581.

When a child held something to be offered to Sri Bhagavan by the parents, they cajoled the child to offer it to Sri Bhagavan. The child did so gladly. Sri Bhagavan remarked: Look at this! When the child can give a thing away to *Jeja* it is *tyaga*. (*Jeja* -God). See what influence *Jeja* has on children also! Every gift implies unselfishness. That is the whole content of *nishkama* Karma (unselfish action). It means true renunciation. If the giving nature is developed it becomes *tyaga*. If anything is willingly given away it is a delight to the giver and to the receiver. If the same is stolen it is misery to both. *Dana*, *dharma*, *nishkama* Karma are all *tyaga* only. When 'mine' is given up it is *chitta suddhi* (purified mind). When 'I' is given up it is *jnana*. When the nature to give away is developed it results in *jnana*.

Again a little later, a young boy came all alone, unescorted by his parents. He had come from Chengam in a bus. Sri Bhagavan remarked, "The boy has left his parents to come here. This is also an instance of *tyaga*."

21st. 22nd November, 1938

Talk 582.

To an Andhra gentleman Sri Bhagavan said: If one goes on wanting, one's wants cannot be fulfilled. Whereas if one remains desireless anything will be forthcoming. We are not in the wife, children, profession, etc.; but they are in us; they appear and disappear according to one's *prarabdha*.

The mind remaining still is *samadhi*, no matter whether the world is perceived or not.

Environment, time and objects are all in me. How can they be independent of me? They may change, but I remain unchanging, always the same. The objects can be differentiated by means of their names and forms, whereas each one's name is only one and that is 'I'. Ask anyone, he says 'I' and speaks of himself as 'I', even if He is *Isvara*. His name too is 'I' only.

So also of a locality. As long as I am identified with the body so long a locality is distinguishable; otherwise not. Am I the body? Does the body announce itself as 'I'?

Clearly all these are in me. All these wiped out entirely, the residual Peace is 'I'. This is *samadhi*, this is 'I'.

Talk 583.

Mr. V. Ganapati Sastri showed Sri Bhagavan a letter from a Spanish lady, Mercedes De Acosta, saying she would be coming here the next day. Sri Bhagavan remarked: "See the trouble to so many because I am here."

23rd November, 1938

REMINISCENCE

Talk 584.

A certain visitor began to pull the *pankah*. Sri Bhagavan said: "Because it is cold, they have placed fire by my side. Why should the *pankah* be pulled?"

Then he continued: "On a cold morning, when I was in Virupaksha cave, I was sitting in the open. I was feeling cold. People used to come, see me and go back. A group of Andhra visitors had come. I did not notice what they were doing. They were behind me. Suddenly a noise '*tak*' - and water over my head! I shivered with cold. I looked back. They had broken a coconut and poured the water on me. They thought that it was worship. They took me for a stone image."

Talk 585.

Sri Bhagavan said that this town is peculiar in that there are nine roads leading to it, not counting the railroad; *navadware pure dehe* (in the body - the city of nine gates).

Talk 586.

An Andhra visitor asked: How is one to be quiet? It is so difficult to be so. Should we practise *yoga* for it? Or is there any other means for it?

M.: What is not difficult looks difficult. A man is prone to wander about. He is told to stay quiet at home, but finds it difficult to do so because he wants to wander about.

D.: Is there any particular *upasana* which is more efficacious than others?

M.: All *upasanas* are equally efficacious. But each one takes easily to one kind of *upasana* which suits his previous *vasanas*.

24th November, 1938

Talk 587.

The Spanish lady and her lady friend have come. They asked: You say the Heart is on the right. Can you explain how it is so?

Sri Bhagavan handed over the extract from the *Psychological Review* of Philadelphia for her to read. He also added. The Heart is the place wherefrom the 'I-thought' arises.

D.: So you mean the spiritual Heart as distinguished from the physical heart?

M.: Yes. It is explained in Ch. V of *Sri Ramana Gita*.

D.: Is there any stage when one might feel the Heart?

M.: It is within the experience of everyone. Everyone touches the right side of his chest when he says 'I'.

Both the ladies kneeled before Sri Bhagavan one after another and asked for blessings. Then they left for Pondicherry on their way to Colombo.

25th November, 1938

Talk 588.

To an Andhra seeker, Sri Bhagavan said: *Sannyasa* is mentioned for one who is fit. It consists in renunciation not of material objects but of attachment to them. *Sannyasa* can be practised by anyone even at home. Only one must be fit for it. Again.

A *Kutichaka* is one who takes *sannyasa* and lives in a hermitage;
A *Bahudaka* is one who takes *sannyasa* and goes to places of pilgrimage;
A *Hamsa* is an *upasaka sannyasi*;
A *Paramahamsa* is a realised *sannyasi*.

27th November, 1938

Talk 589.

Somasundara Swami, a long standing devotee, asked: There is *akasa* in a mirror and it reflects images. How are these contained in the mirror?

M.: Objects remain in space. Objects and space are together reflected in the mirror. Just as the things are found in space, so they are in the reflection also. The mirror is itself thin. How can these objects be contained in its compass?

D.: How does the *akasa* in a pot illustrate this point?

M.: There is no reflection in the *akasa* of the pot. The reflection is only in the water in it. Keeping several pots filled with water in a tank, the *akasa* is reflected equally in the water in each of the pots and in the water of the tank. Similarly the whole universe is reflected in each individual.

D.: The mouths of the pots must be above the surface of the water in the tank.

M.: Yes, it must be so. Otherwise can the pots be recognised if sunk in the tank?

D.: How does the reflection take place there?

M.: Pure ether cannot take reflections; only the ether of water can do so. Glass cannot reflect objects; only a plate of glass with an opaque lining on its back can reflect the objects in front of it. Similarly Pure Knowledge does not contain objects in it nor reflect objects. Only with the limiting adjunct, the mind, it reflects the world.

Neither in *samadhi* nor in deep sleep does the world remain. There cannot be illusion either in bright light or in total darkness. Only in dim light a rope seems a snake. Similarly Pure Consciousness remains light only; it is pure knowledge. The mind rising from it is deluded that the objects remain apart.

D.: So then the mind is the mirror.

M.: Mind - mind what is it? It is a mixture of *Chit* (intelligence) and *sankalpas* (thoughts). Therefore it forms all these - the mirror, light, darkness and the reflections.

D.: But I do not see it.

M.: Chidakasa (chit-ether) is Pure Knowledge only, It is the source of mind. Just at the moment of rising up, the mind is only light; only afterwards the thought "I am this" rises up; this 'I-thought' forms the *jiva* and the world.

The first light is the pure mind, the mind ether or *Isvara*. Its modes manifest as objects. Because it contains all these objects within itself it is called the mind-ether. Why ether? Like ether containing objects it contains the thoughts, therefore it is the mind-ether.

Again, just as the physical ether though accommodating all the gross objects (the whole universe) is itself the content of the mind-ether, so also the latter is itself the content of *Chit*-ether. The last one is *Chit* Itself. There are no things contained in it. It remains as Pure Knowledge only.

D.: Why call it ether? Physical ether is not sentient.

M.: Ether denotes not only the insentient physical ether but also Pure Knowledge. Knowledge does not consist in knowing objects: this is relative knowledge. But Knowledge in its purity remains all alone, One, unique, transcendent Light!

D.: Well - should we be imagining it in our meditation?

M.: Why imagine? We can think of another only if we are independent of it, whereas here we cannot remain independent of this Pure Knowledge. Rather, only IT is! How can It be imagined to be so and so or such and such?

D.: How are we to proceed?

M.: Only get rid of the non-self.

D.: It looks all right now; but later it is all forgotten.

M.: Your forgetfulness implies knowledge, for you know you forgot; otherwise how can you speak of forgetting it? So forgetfulness also is *Chit-akasa* (Chit-ether) only.

D.: How then is it not clear to me?

M.: Chit is knowledge pure and simple. The mind proceeds from it; the mind is made up of thoughts. Darkness or ignorance interposing.

Pure Knowledge seems different from what It really is; the same is seen as 'I' and the 'world' which are full of desire, attachment, hatred, etc. Therefore desire, etc., are said to veil the Reality.

D.: How to be rid of thoughts? Is it as said in the *Atma-Vidya* - the eye of the mental eye, etc.?

M.: There the mind stands for ether, Being (*sat*); and the eye for knowledge (*chit*); both *sat* and *chit* together form the universe.

D.: How to realise the same?

M.: As pointed out in the *Atma Vidya* "being the eye of the mental eye, the ether of the mental ether.....", meaning, the Knowledge behind the relative knowledge, the *Chit*-Ether containing the mental ether, remains as the Only One always shining bright.

D.: Still I do not understand. How shall I realise it?

M.: It is also said, "Remain free from thoughts," and "It is realised only in the mind drawn within." Therefore, the mind made free from thoughts, and merged in the Heart. is *Chit* Itself.

D.: Is the aforesaid mental ether *Isvara* or *Hiranyagarbha*?

M.: Can the latter remain independent of the former? The same is *Isvara* and *Hiranyagarbha*.

D.: How do they differ from each other?

M.: The Immanent Being is called *Isvara*.

D.: Is not the Immanent Being *Chit-akasa* only?

M.: Immanence can only be with *Maya*. It is the Knowledge of Being along with *Maya*; from this subtle conceit *Hiranyagarbha*; from the latter the gross conceit *virat*. *Chit-atma* is Pure Being only.

13th December, 1938

Talk 590.

Two ladies, one Swiss and the other French, visited Maharshi. The younger of the ladies asked several questions, of which the most important was: "Brahman is the same as *jiva*. If the *jiva* be under illusion it amounts to saying that Brahman is under illusion. How is that possible?"

M.: If Brahman be under illusion and wants disillusionment let Him raise the question.

14th December, 1938

Talk 591.

D.: Seekers who are in immediate proximity of the Master can get grace by *darsana, sparsana*, etc. (look, touch, etc.). But how does one get the same grace when the person is at a distance?

M.: By yoga *drishti* (yogic look).

Mr. Chopra, a Punjabi employed in Singapore, is on a visit here and raised a few questions.

D.: What is the efficacy of the name?

Sri Bhagavan read out the extract from the *Vision*. It was a translation of Namdev's stanzas.

D.: How does the name help Realisation?

M.: The original name is always going on spontaneously without any effort on the part of the individual. That name is *aham* - 'I'. But when it becomes manifest it manifests as *ahamkara* - the ego. The oral repetition of *nama* leads one to mental repetition which finally resolves itself into the eternal vibration.

D.: But these are all mental or physical.

M.: The mind or the mouth cannot act without the Self. Tukaram, the great Maharashtra Saint, used to remain in *samadhi* in the day and sing and dance at night with large crowds of people. He always used to utter the name of Sri Rama.

Once he was answering calls of nature and also saying "Ram, Ram". An orthodox priest was shocked at the unholy mention of the sacred name and so reprimanded him and ordered him to be silent when he answered calls of nature.

Tukaram said, "All right!" and remained mute. But at once there arose the name of Rama from every pore of Tukaram and the priest was horrified by the din. He then prayed to Tukaram "Restrictions are only for the common people and not for saints like you."

D.: It is said that Sri Ramakrishna saw life in the image of Kali which he worshipped. Can it be true?

M.: The life was perceptible to Sri Ramakrishna and not to all. The vital force was due to himself. It was his own vital force which manifested as if it were outside and drew him in. Were the image full of life it must have been found so by all. But everything is full of life. That is the fact. Many devotees have had experiences similar to those of Sri Ramakrishna.

D.: How can there be life in stone? It is unconscious.

M.: The whole universe is full of life. You say the stone is unconscious. It is your self-consciousness which now speaks of unconsciousness. When a person wants to see if there is an article in a dark room he takes a lamp to look for it. The light is useful for detecting the presence and the absence of the thing. Consciousness is necessary for discovering if a thing is conscious or not. If a man remains in a dark room one need not take a lamp to find him. If called, he answers. He does not require a lamp to announce his presence. Consciousness is thus self-shining.

Now you say you were unconscious in sleep and self-conscious in the wakeful state. Which is the Reality? The Reality must be continuous and eternal. Neither the unconsciousness nor the self-consciousness of the present is the Reality. But you admit your existence all through. The pure Being is the reality. The others are mere associations. The pure Being cannot be otherwise than consciousness. Otherwise you cannot say that you exist. Therefore consciousness is the reality. When that consciousness is associated with *upadhis* you speak of self-consciousness, unconsciousness, sub-consciousness, super-consciousness, human-consciousness, dog-consciousness, tree-consciousness and so on. The unaltering common factor in all of them is consciousness.

Therefore the stone is as much unconscious as you are in sleep. Is that totally devoid of consciousness?

D.: But a dog-consciousness is different from my consciousness. I cannot read the Bible to the dog. The tree again does not move whereas I move and act.

M.: Call the tree a standing man; and call the man a moving tree.

An American gentleman who also took part in the conversation would not allow Sri Bhagavan to explain and so it stopped here.

Talk 592.

The Punjabi gentleman referred to the popular belief of a worm being metamorphosed to a wasp (*bhramarakita nyaya*) which Sri Bhagavan had mentioned to the ladies in the course of conversation yesterday. Sri Bhagavan recalled some interesting reminiscences:

1. "I had previously heard of this *bhramarakita nyaya*. After I came to Tiruvannamalai, when I was staying in Gurumoortham, I noticed a red wasp construct a hive in which it placed five or six grubs and then flew away. My curiosity was roused and I wanted to test the truth of the oft-quoted *nyaya*. I waited some days, maybe ten days. I then tapped the hive. It broke and there I found that all the five or six grubs had united together and taken the shape of a wasp, but it was white.

2. Later when I was in Virupaksha Cave, I saw a red wasp construct five or six hives in each of which it placed five or six grubs and flew away. After about ten days, a black beetle, smaller than the wasp, buzzed round the hives and closed each of then, with a little black mud and flew away. I was wondering at the intrusion of the beetle on the hive of the wasp. I waited a few days and then gently opened one of the hives. Five or six black bodies came out and each of them was a black beetle. I thought it strange.

3. Again when I was in Pachyamman Temple, I saw a red wasp constructing five or six hives on a pillar in the temple. It placed five or six grubs in each of them and buzzed away. I watched it for several days. The wasp did not return. There was no black beetle also. After about fifteen days, I opened one of the hives. All the grubs had united into a white mass of wasp-like form. It dropped down and was stunned by the fall. After a few minutes, it began to crawl. Its colour was gradually changing. In a short time, there were two little specks on its sides which grew into wings as I watched and the full-grown wasp flew away from the ground.

4. When I was in the Mango-Tree Cave I noticed a caterpillar-like worm crawl up a wall. It stopped in one place and fixed two spots which it later connected up with a thin filament from its body. It held the filament with its mouth and rested its tail end on the wall. It remained so several days. I was watching it. It shrivelled up in course of time. I wondered if there

was life in it. So I gently tickled it with a thin stalk. There was no life within. I left it there. But in a few days more I found that there was only a thin dry skin left behind and the inner thing had flown away.

5. I had also seen the flies carrying tiny grubs on their legs which they deposited on offal. The grubs later flew away as flies."

D.: They may be eggs laid by the flies.

M.: But they move and struggle and then shape themselves as flies.

Talk 593.

Sri Bhagavan mentioned another interesting reminiscence. "When I was a boy I had seen the fishermen divert water from its main course and keep a pot through which the diverted water flowed. The artificial way was spread with tobacco stems. Strangely enough the larger fishes always took the new way and fell into the pot. The fishermen who were simply sitting quiet used to take the fish out from the pot and throw them into their baskets. I thought at the time it was strange. Later, when I was staying here I heard some man recite a piece from Thayumanavar which mentioned the same trick of the fishermen."

15th December, 1938

Talk 594.

The Spanish lady, Madam Mercedes De Acorta, has written a letter to Mr. Hague, the American mining engineer who is here as a temporary resident for the last two months. She has raised a few questions there: "If the individual Self merges into the universal Self, how can one pray to God for the uplift of humanity?" The question seems to be common among the thinkers of the West.

Sri Bhagavan said: They pray to God and finish with "Thy Will be done!" If His Will be done why do they pray at all? It is true that the Divine Will prevails at all times and under all circumstances. The individuals cannot act of their own accord. Recognise the force of the Divine Will and keep quiet. Each one is looked after by God. He has created all. You are one among 2,000 millions. When He looks after so many will He omit you? Even common sense dictates that one should abide by His Will.

Again there is no need to let Him know your needs. He knows them Himself and will look after them.

Still more, why do you pray? Because you are helpless yourself and you want the Higher Power to help you. Well, does not your Creator and Protector know your weakness? Should you parade your weakness in order to make Him know it?

D.: But God helps those who help themselves.

M.: Certainly. Help yourself and that is itself according to God's Will. Every action is prompted by Him only. As for prayer for the sake of others, it looks so unselfish on the surface of it. But analyse the feeling and you will detect selfishness there also. You desire others' happiness so that you may be happy. Or you want the credit for having interceded on others' behalf. God does not require an intermediary. Mind your business and all will be well.

D.: Does not God work His Will through some chosen person?

M.: God is in all and works through all. But His presence is better recognised in purified minds. The pure ones reflect God's actions more clearly than the impure minds. Therefore people say that they are the chosen ones. But the 'chosen' man does not himself say so. If he thinks that he is the intermediary then it is clear that he retains his individuality and that there is no complete surrender.

D.: Are not the Brahmins considered to be the priests or intermediaries between God and others?

M.: Yes. But who is a Brahmin? A Brahmin is one who has realised Brahman. Such a one has no sense of individuality in him. He cannot think that he acts as an intermediary.

Again, as for prayer, a realised man does not see others as different from oneself. How can he pray at all, and to whom and for what? His very presence is the consummation of happiness for all. So long as you think that there are others different from you, you pray for them. But the sense of separateness is ignorance. This ignorance is again the cause of feeling helplessness. You know that you are weak and helpless. How then can you help others? If you say, "By prayer to God", God knows His business and does not require your intercession for others.

Help yourself so that you may become strong. That is done by complete surrender. That means you offer yourself to Him. So you cannot retain your individuality after surrender. You then abide by His Will. Thus Silence is the Highest of all achievements.

Silence is the ocean in which all the rivers of all the religions discharge themselves. So says Thayumanavar. He also adds that the Vedic religion is the only one which combines both philosophy and religion.

16th December, 1938

Talk 595.

The two lady visitors returned in the morning and the younger one asked:

“Is the experience of the Highest State the same to all? Or is there any difference?”

M.: The Highest State is the same and the experience is also the same.

D.: But I find some difference in the interpretations put on the Highest Truth.

M.: The interpretations are made with the mind. The minds are different and so the interpretations are different.

D.: I mean to ask if the seers express themselves differently?

M.: The expressions may differ according to the nature of the seekers. They are meant to guide the seekers.

One seer speaks in the terms of Christianity, another in those of Islam, a third of Buddhism, etc. Is that due to their upbringing?

M.: Whatever may be their upbringing, their experience is the same. But the modes of expression differ according to circumstances.

Talk 596.

A visitor asked: Sri Bhagavan said last night that God is guiding us. Then why should we make an effort to do anything?

M.: Who asks you to do so? If there was that faith in the guidance of God this question would not have arisen.

D.: The fact is that God guides us. Then what is the use of these instructions to people?

M.: They are for those who seek instructions. If you are firm in your belief in the guidance of God, stick to it, and do not concern yourself with what happens around you.

Furthermore, there may be happiness or misery. Be equally indifferent to both and abide in the faith of God. That will be so only when one's faith is strong that God looks after all of us.

Mr. Chopra asked: "How shall I secure that firm faith?"

M.: Exactly. It is for such as these who want instructions. There are persons who seek freedom from misery. They are told that God guides all and so there need not be any concern about what happens. If they are of the best type they at once believe it and firmly abide by faith in God.

But there are others who are not so easily convinced of the truth of the bare statement. They ask: "Who is God? What is His nature? Where is He? How can He be realised?" and so on.

In order to satisfy them intellectual discussion is found necessary. Statements are made, their pros and cons are argued, and the truth is thus made clear to the intellect.

When the matter is understood intellectually the earnest seeker begins to apply it practically. He argues at every moment, "For whom are these thoughts? Who am I?" and so forth, until he is well-established in the conviction that a Higher Power guides us. That is firmness of faith. Then all his doubts are cleared and he needs no further instructions.

D.: We also have faith in God.

M.: If it had been firm no questions would have arisen. The person will remain perfectly happy in his Faith in the Omnipotent.

D.: Is the enquiry into the Self the same as the above mentioned faith?

M.: The enquiry into the Self is inclusive of all, faith, devotion, *jnana*, yoga and all.

D.: A man sometimes finds that the physical body does not permit steady meditation. Should he practise yoga for training the body for the purpose?

M.: It is according to one's *samskaras* (predispositions). One man will practise *hatha yoga* for curing his bodily ills; another man will trust to God to cure them; a third man will use his will-power for it and a fourth man may be totally indifferent to them. But all of them will persist in meditation. The quest for the Self is the essential factor and all the rest are mere accessories.

A man may have mastered the *Vedanta* philosophy and yet remain unable to control his thoughts. He may have a predisposition (*purva samskara*) which takes him to practise *hatha* yoga. He will believe that the mind can be controlled only by yoga and so he will practise it.

D.: What is most suitable for gaining facilities for steady *dhyana*?

M.: It depends on one's *samskara*. One may find *hatha* yoga suitable and another man *nama japa*, and so on. The essential point is the *atma-vichara* - enquiry into the Self.

D.: Is it enough if I spend some time in the mornings and some time in the evenings for this *atma-vichara*? Or should I do it always - say, even when I am writing or walking?

M.: Now what is your real nature? Is it writing, walking, or being? The one unalterable reality is *Being*. Until you realise that state of pure being you should pursue the enquiry. If once you are established in it there will be no further worry.

No one will enquire into the source of thoughts unless thoughts arise. So long as you think "I am walking," "I am writing," enquire who does it.

These actions will however go on when one is firmly established in the Self. Does a man always say, "I am a man, I am a man, I am a man," every moment of his life? He does not say so and yet all his actions are going on.

D.: Is an intellectual understanding of the Truth necessary?

M.: Yes. Otherwise why does not the person realise God or the Self at once, *i.e.*, as soon as he is told that God is all or the Self is all? That shows some wavering on his part. He must argue with himself and gradually convince himself of the Truth before his faith becomes firm.

20th December, 1938

Talk 597.

A Swiss lady, Mrs. J. C. S. Hick-Riddingh, asked: "Does Self-Realisation imply occult powers also?"

M.: The Self is the most intimate and eternal Being whereas the *siddhis* are foreign. The one requires effort to acquire and the other does not.

The powers are sought by the mind which must be kept alert whereas the Self is realised when the mind is destroyed. The powers manifest only when there is the ego. The ego makes you aware of others and in its absence there are no others to be seen. The Self is beyond the ego and is realised after the ego is eliminated. The elimination of the ego makes one unaware of others. How can the question of others arise and where is the use of occult powers for a Self-Realised Being?

Self-Realisation may be accompanied by occult powers or it may not be. If the person had sought such powers before Realisation, he may get the powers after Realisation. There are others who had not sought such powers and had attempted only Self-Realisation. They do not manifest such powers.

These powers may also be sought and gained even after Self-Realisation. But then they are used for a definite purpose, *i.e.* the benefit of others as in the case of Chudala.

Sikhidhvaja was a pious king. His spouse was Chudala. They received instructions from a sage. The king, being busy with the administration of his kingdom, could not put the instructions into practice, whereas Chudala put them into practice and gained Self-Realisation. Consequently she appeared more charming than before. The king was struck by her growing charm and asked her about it. She said that all charm was due to the Self and he was only noting the charm of Self-Realisation in her. He said that she was silly. There were great *tapasvis* who could not realise the Self even after long periods of *tapas* and what about a silly woman who was all along in the family and in the worldly life?

However, Chudala was not offended because she was firm in the Self and only wished that her husband should realise the Self and

be happy. She then thought that unless she could prove her worth by manifesting some extraordinary powers he could not be convinced and she began to seek occult powers and gained them. But she did not betray them just then. Constant association with her made the king dispassionate. He began to dislike the worldly life and desired to retire into the forest for performing *tapasya*. So he told his wife that he wanted to leave the world for the forest. She was delighted at the development, but pretended to be very much concerned with his unkind decision. He hesitated out of consideration for her. In the meantime, his dispassion gained in force and he decided to leave home even without her consent.

When the queen was sleeping one night he suddenly left the palace by stealth and retired into the forest. He was seeking some solitary spot where he could perform his *tapas*. When the queen woke up she did not find her husband and immediately found out by her occult powers what had really happened. She rejoiced in her husband's determination. She called the ministers and said that the king had gone on some important business and that the administration should be carried on as efficiently as ever. She herself administered the state in the absence of the king.

Eighteen years passed. She then knew that the king was fit for Self-Realisation. So she appeared to him disguised as Kumbha and so on. He then realised the Self and returned to rule the kingdom with the queen.

The point is that occult powers are sought and gained for the benefit of others by Self-Realised persons also. But the sages are not deluded by the possession of such powers.

D.: Does the sage use occult powers for making others realise the Self or is the mere fact of his Self-Realisation enough for it?

M.: The force of his Self-Realisation is far more powerful than the use of all other powers.

Inasmuch as there is no ego in him, there are not others for him. What is the highest benefit that can be conferred on others? It is happiness. Happiness is born of Peace. Peace can reign only when there is no disturbance. Disturbance is due to thoughts which arise in the mind. When the mind itself is absent there will be perfect

Peace. Unless a person had annihilated his mind he cannot gain peace and be happy. Unless he himself is happy he cannot bestow happiness on others.

When there is no mind he cannot be aware of others. So the mere fact of his Self-Realisation is itself enough to make all others happy.

D.: Can *samadhi* come and go?

M.: What is *samadhi*? *Samadhi* is one's essential nature. How then can it come or go?

If you do not realise your essential nature, your sight remains obstructed. What is the obstruction? Find it and remove it. So one's efforts are meant only for the removal of obstructions which hide the true vision. The real nature remains the same. When once it is realised it is permanent.

D.: But Mr. Brunton says that he had one hour's *samadhi*. Therefore I asked the question.

M.: A practiser gains peace of mind and is happy. That peace is the result of his efforts. But the real state must be effortless. The effortless *samadhi* is the true one and the perfect state. It is permanent. The efforts are spasmodic and so also their results.

When the real, effortless, permanent, happy nature is realised it will be found to be not inconsistent with the ordinary activities of life. The *samadhi* reached after efforts looks like abstraction from the external activities. A person might be so abstracted or live freely among people without detriment to his Peace and Happiness because that is his true nature or the Self.

21st December, 1938

Talk 598.

Sri Bhagavan shows great humour at times: He read *Upamanya Bhakta Vilas* which contains a passage where Arunachalesvara is said to have robbed Tirujnanasambandar and his group of followers of all their possessions by His *bhutaganas* disguised as dacoits. Sri Bhagavan remarked: "Siva Himself was waylaid in *Tiruvudal Utsava* and He practised the same trick on His devotees. Can it be so?"

Talk 599.

A saying of Laotze from *Tao Teh Ch'ing* was read out in the hall: "By his non-action the sage governs all."

Sri Bhagavan remarked: Non-action is unceasing activity. The sage is characterised by eternal and intense activity. His stillness is like the apparent stillness of a fast rotating top (gyroscope). Its very speed cannot be followed by the eye and so it appears to be still. Yet it is rotating. So is the apparent inaction of the sage.

This must be explained because the people generally mistake stillness to be inertness. It is not so.

24th December, 1938

Talk 600.

A young man asked in broken Tamil:

How long will it be before Self-Realisation?

M.: First know what Self means and also what Realisation means: then you will know all.

D.: The mind must realise in the Heart.

M.: Be it so. What is mind?

D.: Mind, Heart are all *avatars* of Perumal (Vaishnavite term for incarnate God).

M.: If so no need to worry ourselves.

D.: On this basis how can we realise?

M.: Surrender the mind to Perumal (God). His *avatar* cannot remain independent of Him. Render unto Him what is His and be happy.

D.: How to do so?

M.: How is the mind known to us? Owing to its activities, namely, thoughts. Whenever thoughts arise remember they are all modes of Perumal and they cannot be otherwise, this is enough; this is the surrender of the mind.

Can anything exist independent of Perumal? All is Perumal alone. He acts through all. Why worry ourselves?

27th December, 1938

Talk 601.

G. V. Subbaramiah, an Andhra devotee, mentioned something about *time*.

M.: What is *time*? It posits a state, one's recognition of it, and also the changes which affect it. The interval between two states is called *time*. A state cannot come into being unless the mind calls it into existence. The mind must be held by the Self. If the mind is not made use of there is no concept of time. Time and space are in the mind but one's true state lies beyond the mind. The question of time does not arise at all to the one established in one's true nature.

Mr. Narayana Iyer: Sri Bhagavan's words are so pleasing to hear but their import is beyond our comprehension. That seems to be far too much for us even to hope to realise.

G. V. S.: Our grasp is only intellectual. If Sri Bhagavan be pleased to direct us with a few instructions we shall be highly benefited.

M.: He who instructs an ardent seeker to do this or that is not a true master. The seeker is already afflicted by his activities and wants Peace and Rest. In other words he wants cessation of his activities. Instead of that he is told to do something in addition to, or in place of, his other activities. Can that be a help to the seeker?

Activity is creation; activity is the destruction of one's inherent happiness. If activity be advocated the adviser is not a master but the killer. Either the Creator (*Brahma*) or Death (*Yama*) may be said to have come in the guise of such a master. He cannot liberate the aspirant but strengthens his fetters.

D.: When we attempt to cease from activity the very attempt is action. So activity seems to be inevitable.

M.: True. Thayumanavar has also alluded to it. A doctor advises a patient to take the prescribed medicine with only one condition. That condition is not to think of a monkey when he takes the medicine. Can the patient ever take the medicine? Will he not think of the monkey whenever he tries not to do so?

So also, when people try to give up thoughts their object is frustrated by their very attempt.

D.: How then is the state to be attained?

M.: What is there to attain? A thing remains to be attained if it is not already attained. But here one's very being is *That*.

Someone: Why do we not then know it?

Annamalaiswami: I should always try to think *I am That*.

M.: Why should one think "I am That"? He is That only. Does a man go on thinking that he is a man?

Mr. Anantachari: The belief 'I am a man' is so deep that we cannot help thinking so.

M.: Why should you think "I am a man"? If you are challenged you may say 'I am a man'. Therefore the thought - 'I am a man' - is called up when another thought, say 'I am an animal', protrudes itself. Similarly, the thought *I am That* is necessary only so long as the other thought *I am a man* persists.

D.: The thought 'I am a man' is so firm that it cannot he got rid of.

M.: Be your true Self. Why should you think 'I am a man'?

D.: The thought 'I am a man' is so natural.

M.: Not so. On the other hand 'I am' is natural. Why do you qualify it with 'a man'?

D.: 'I am a man' is so obvious whereas 'I am That' is not understood by us.

M.: You are neither *That* nor *This*. The truth is 'I am'. "I AM that I AM" according to the Bible also. Mere Being is alone natural. To limit it to 'being a man' is uncalled for.

D.: (Humorously) If votes be taken the majority will be on my side. (Laughter)

M.: I cast my vote also on your side (Laughter). I say also 'I am a man': but I am not limited to the body. It is IN ME. That is the difference.

Someone: The limitation (*upadhi*) of being a man cannot be got rid of.

M.: How were you in deep sleep? There was no thought of being a man.

Another: So, the state of sleep must be brought about even when one is awake.

M.: Yes. It is *jagrat-sushupti*.

Sri Bhagavan continued: Some people even say that while they sleep they are enclosed somewhere in the body. They forget that such an idea did not persist in sleep but rises up only on waking. They bring their waking-state to bear upon their sleep.

The lights went down and all retired.

1st January, 1939

Talk 602.

Dr. Emile Gatheir, S. J., Professor of Philosophy at the Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur, Kodaikanal, asked: "Can you kindly give me a summary of your teachings?"

M.: They are found in small booklets, particularly *Who am I*?

D.: I shall read them. But may I have the central point of your teachings from your lips?

M.: The central point is the thing.

D.: It is not clear.

M.: Find the Centre.

D.: I am from God. Is not God distinct from me?

M.: Who asks this question? God does not ask it. You ask it. So find who you are and then you may find if God is distinct from you.

D.: But God is Perfect and I am imperfect. How can I ever know Him fully?

M.: God does not say so. The question is for you. After finding who you are you may see what God is.

D.: But you have found your Self. Please let us know if God is distinct from you.

M.: It is a matter of experience. Each one must experience it himself.

D.: Oh! I see. But God is Infinite and I am finite. I have a personality which can never merge into God. Is it not so?

M.: Infinity and Perfection do not admit of parts. If a finite being comes out of infinity the perfection of infinity is marred. Thus your statement is a contradiction in terms.

D.: No. I see both God and creation.

M.: How are you aware of your personality?

D.: I have a soul. I know it by its activities.

M.: Did you know it in deep sleep?

D.: The activities are suspended in deep sleep.

M.: But you exist in sleep. So do you now too. Which of these two is your real state?

D.: Sleep and waking are mere accidents. I am the substance behind the accidents.

(He looked up at the clock and said that it was time for him to catch the train. He left after thanking Sri Bhagavan. So the conversation ended abruptly).

8th January, 1939

Talk 603.

Lady Bateman came here with her daughter to visit Sri Bhagavan. She brought a letter from Pascaline Maillert, Versailles, which reads as follows:

"Two years have come and gone since last I crossed the threshold of Thy Ashram and yet in spirit I have ever remained there.

"Though illusion still often veils the vision of Reality revealed in the blessed Silence of Thy Presence.

"Though the Silver Thread of Self-awareness be often lost midst changing light and shadows, still the inner urge to realise the Self remains and stronger grows and more insistent as Grace and search go hand in hand.

"At times, yet rare, with no apparent cause, spontaneous awareness of the 'I' springs up and bliss fills the heart with glowing warmth. Effortless concentration goes with this state while all desires do come to rest fulfilled in utmost peace, till once more the veil is drawn and illusion seeks to blur the vision of the Real.

"Yet what the soul has experienced and knows repeatedly as Truth, can neither be denied nor ever forgotten and 'That which is' gives constant strength to persevere.

"I pray to Thee as to my Self for light and guidance that I know are ever there and at Thy feet lay offerings of unchanging love."

(Sd.) Pascaline, 11, Rue des Reservous.
Versailles, 21st November, 1938.

10th January, 1939

Talk 604.

A certain lady was singing a devotional song. It said among other things:

> "Thou art my father,
> Thou art my mother,
> Thou art my relations,
> My possessions and all," and so on.

Sri Bhagavan remarked with a smile, "Yes, Yes, Thou art this, that and everything except 'I'. Why not say 'I am Thou' and finish it?"

Talk 605.

A certain Andhra visitor gave Sri Bhagavan a slip of paper containing several questions which he desired to be answered. Sri Bhagavan took it in His hands, went through the questions and said:

M.: "All these questions arise so long as there is one who can ask questions. If the questioner is sought and found, the questions will end of their own accord."

The man said in reply: Several people raise these points and I do not know how to meet them. Hence I desire to know the fact (*vishaya* was the word used).

M.: If the *vishayi* (*i.e.*, the basis of the facts) be understood, the *vishayas* (*i.e.*, the facts) become clear.

Talk 606.

Mr. Venkatakrishnayya, a lawyer-devotee, visited Sri Bhagavan ten years before and asked Him what he should do to improve himself.

Sri Bhagavan told him to perform *Gayatri Japa*. The young man went away satisfied. When he returned after some years, he asked:

D.: If I meditate on the meaning of the *Gayatri mantra*, my mind again wanders. What is to be done?

M.: Were you told to meditate on the *mantra* or its meaning? You must think of the one who repeats the *mantra*.

Again, the same man had seen another reputed Mahatma who told him to say *Om Namah* instead of “OM” because pure “OM” is meant for *sannyasis* whereas others can repeat *Om Namah*. When he came here he asked Sri Bhagavan about it. Sri Bhagavan replied casually:

Should not others besides the *sannyasis* enquire into the Self and realise it?

17th January, 1939

Talk 607.

Sri Bhagavan said to Lady Bateman: There is a fixed state; sleep, dream and waking states are mere movements in it. They are like pictures moving on the screen in a cinema show.

Everyone sees the screen as well as the pictures but ignores the screen and takes in the pictures alone. The *Jnani* however considers only the screen and not the pictures. The pictures certainly move on the screen yet do not affect it. The screen itself does not move but remains stationary.

Similarly, a person travels in a train and thinks that he moves. Really speaking he sits and reposes in his seat, and it is the train which is steaming fast. He however superimposes the motion of the train on himself because he has identified himself with the body. He says, “I have passed one station - now another - yet another - and so on”. A little consideration will show that he sits unmoved and the stations run past him. But that does not prevent him from saying that he has travelled all the way as if he exerted himself to move every foot of the way.

The *jnani* is fully aware that the true state of Being remains fixed and stationary and that all actions go on around him. His nature does not change and his state is not affected in the least. He looks on everything with unconcern and remains blissful himself.

His is the true state and also the primal and natural state of being. When once the man reaches it he gets fixed there. Fixed once, fixed ever he will be. Therefore that state which prevailed in the days of Pathala Linga Cellar continues uninterrupted, with only this difference that the body remained there immobile but is now active.

There is no difference between a *jnani* and an *ajnani* in their conduct. The difference lies only in their angles of vision. The ignorant man identifies himself with the ego and mistakes its activities for those of the Self, whereas the ego of the *jnani* has been lost and he does not limit himself to this body or that, this event or that, and so on.

There is action in seeming inaction, and also inaction in seeming action as in the following instances:

1. A child is fed while asleep. On waking up the next morning, he denies having been fed. It is a case of inaction in seeming action. For although the mother saw him take his food the child himself is not aware.

2. The cartman sleeps in the cart when it jogs along the way in the night and yet he reaches the destination and claims to have driven the cart. This is a case of action in seeming inaction.

3. A man appearing to listen to a story nods his head to the speaker but yet his mind is otherwise active and he does not really follow the story.

4. Two friends sleep side by side. One of them dreams that both of them travel round the globe and have varied experiences. On waking the dreamer tells the other that both of them have been round the earth. The other treats the story with contempt.

The lady protested that dream and sleep do not make any appeal to her. She was asked why then she should be careful about her bed unless she courted sleep.

She said that it was for relaxation of the exhausted limbs, rather a state of auto-intoxication. “The sleep state is really dull, whereas the waking state is full of beautiful and interesting things.”

M.: What you consider to be filled with beautiful and interesting things is indeed the dull and ignorant state of sleep, according to the *Jnani: Ya nisha sarva bhootanam tasyam jagrati samyami*.

The wise one is wide awake just where darkness rules for others. You must certainly wake up from the sleep which is holding you at present.

18th January, 1939

Talk 608.

Mrs. Hick Riddingh wrote two questions on a slip of paper and asked Sri Bhagavan if her interpretations were correct.

M.: The Self is beyond ignorance and knowledge. It is Absolute. These doubts do not arise to the Self for it is Pure Consciousness and cannot admit of dark ignorance.

D.: From our point of view they arise.

M.: See to whom they arise. Go to their root. See if they arise after you reach their source and hold on to it.

D.: But at the present moment -

M.: Such discussions are theoretical and there will be no end to them. One must be practical and try to solve the problems for oneself by the method suggested. The method has been pointed out already. Find out to whom the questions arise. They resolve themselves immediately.

Talk 609.

Lady Bateman and others came to the hall at about 3-30 p.m. In a few minutes she asked in writing if one is nearer to Pure Consciousness in deep sleep than in the waking state.

M.: The sleep, dream and waking states are mere phenomena appearing on the Self which is itself stationary and also a state of simple awareness. Can anyone remain away from the Self at any moment? This question can arise only if that were possible.

D.: Is it not often said that one is nearer Pure Consciousness in deep slumber than in the waking state?

M.: The question may as well be: Am I nearer to myself in my sleep than in my waking state?

For the Self is Pure Consciousness. No one can ever be away from the Self. The question is possible only if there is duality. But there is no duality in the state of Pure Consciousness.

The same person sleeps, dreams and wakes up. The waking state is considered to be full of beautiful and interesting things. The absence of such experiences makes one say that the sleep state is

dull. Before we proceed further let us make this point clear. Do you not admit that you exist in your sleep?

D.: Yes, I do.

M.: You are the same person that is now awake. Is it not so?

D.: Yes.

M.: So there is a continuity in the sleep and the waking states. What is that continuity? It is only the state of Pure Being.

There is a difference in the two states. What is that difference? The incidents, namely, the body, the world and the objects appear in the waking state but they disappear in sleep.

D.: But I am not aware in my sleep.

M.: True, there is no awareness of the body or of the world. But you must exist in your sleep in order to say now "I was not aware in my sleep". Who says so now? It is the wakeful person. The sleeper cannot say so. That is to say, the individual who is now identifying the Self with the body says that such awareness did not exist in sleep.

Because you identify yourself with the body, you see the world around you and say that the waking state is filled with beautiful and interesting things. The sleep state appears dull because you were not there as an individual and therefore these things were not. But what is the fact? There is the continuity of Being in all the three states, but no continuity of the individual and the objects.

D.: Yes.

M.: That which is continuous is also enduring, *i.e.* permanent. That which is discontinuous is transitory.

D.: Yes.

M.: Therefore the state of Being is permanent and the body and the world are not. They are fleeting phenomena passing on the screen of Being-Consciousness which is eternal and stationary.

D.: Relatively speaking, is not the sleep state nearer to Pure Consciousness than the waking state?

M.: Yes, in this sense: When passing from sleep to waking the 'I' thought must start; the mind comes into play; thoughts arise; and then the functions of the body come into operation; all these together

make us say that we are awake. The absence of all this evolution is the characteristic of sleep and therefore it is nearer to Pure Consciousness than the waking state.

But one should not therefore desire to be always in sleep. In the first place it is impossible, for it will necessarily alternate with the other states. Secondly it cannot be the state of bliss in which the *jnani* is, for his state is permanent and not alternating. Moreover, the sleep state is not recognised to be one of awareness by people, but the sage is always aware. Thus the sleep state differs from the state in which the sage is established.

Still more, the sleep state is free from thoughts and their impression to the individual. It cannot be altered by one's will because effort is impossible in that condition. Although nearer to Pure Consciousness, it is not fit for efforts to realise the Self.

The incentive to realise can arise only in the waking state and efforts can also be made only when one is awake. We learn that the thoughts in the waking state form the obstacle to gaining the stillness of sleep. "Be still and know that I AM God". So stillness is the aim of the seeker. Even a single effort to still at least a single thought even for a trice goes a long way to reach the state of quiescence. Effort is required and it is possible in the waking state only. There is the effort here: there is awareness also; the thoughts are stilled; so there is the peace of sleep gained. That is the state of the *jnani*. It is neither sleep nor waking but intermediate between the two. There is the awareness of the waking state and the stillness of sleep. It is called *jagrat-sushupti*. Call it wakeful sleep or sleeping wakefulness or sleepless waking or wakeless sleep. It is not the same as sleep or waking separately. It is *atijagrat*[1] (beyond wakefulness) or *atisushupti*[2] (beyond sleep). It is the state of perfect awareness and of perfect stillness combined. It lies between sleep and waking; it is also the interval between two successive thoughts. It is the source from which thoughts spring; we see that when we wake up from sleep. In other words thoughts have their origin in the stillness of sleep. The thoughts make all the difference between the stillness of sleep and the turmoil of waking. Go to the

1. *Jagrat of jagrat*.

2 .'Sleep of sleep'. It is beyond *jagrat* and sleep as well as in them.

root of the thoughts and you reach the stillness of sleep. But you reach it in the full vigour of search, that is, with perfect awareness.

That is again *jagrat-sushupti* spoken of before. It is not dullness; but it is Bliss. It is not transitory but it is eternal. From that the thoughts proceed. What are all our experiences but thoughts? Pleasure and pain are mere thoughts. They are within ourselves. If you are free from thoughts and yet aware, you are That Perfect Being.

Lady Bateman appreciated the discourse and thanked Sri Bhagavan. Later, she said that she would be leaving the next day.

Sri Bhagavan smiled and said: You do not leave one place for another. You are always stationary. The scenes go past you. Even from the ordinary point of view you sit in your cabin and the ship sails but you do not move. We see a picture of a man running several miles and rushing towards us but the screen does not move. It is the picture that moves on and away.

D.: I see, but I can understand it only after I realise the Self.

M.: The Self is always realised. Were Realisation something to be gained hereafter there is an equal chance of its being lost. It will thus be only transitory. Transitory bliss brings pain in its train. It cannot be liberation which is eternal.

Were it true that you realise it later it means that you are not realised now. Absence of Realisation of the present moment may be repeated at any moment in the future, for Time is infinite. So too, such realisation is impermanent. But that is not true. It is wrong to consider Realisation to be impermanent. It is the True Eternal State which cannot change.

D.: Yes, I shall understand it in course of time.

M.: You are already That. Time and space cannot affect the Self. They are in you; so also all that you see around you are in you. There is a story to illustrate this point: A lady had a precious necklace round her neck. Once in her excitement she forgot it and thought that the necklace was lost. She became anxious and looked for it in her home but could not find it. She asked her friends and neighbours if they knew anything about the necklace. They did not. At last a kind friend of hers told her to feel the necklace round the neck. She found that it had all along been round her neck and she was happy! When others asked her later

if she found the necklace which was lost, she said, “Yes, I have found it.” She still felt that she had recovered a lost jewel.

Now did she lose it at all? It was all along round her neck. But judge her feelings. She is happy as if she had recovered a lost jewel. Similarly with us, we imagine that we would realise that Self some time, whereas we are never anything but the Self.

D.: I feel that I am transplanted into some other land than the earth.

Sri Bhagavan, while looking into some correspondence, heard it, smiled and said: This is the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven mentioned in the Bible and this world are not two different regions. “The Kingdom is within you,” says the Bible. So it is. The realised being sees this as the Kingdom of Heaven whereas the others see it as ‘this world’. The difference lies only in the angles of vision.

D.: How can we deny the world and the people therein? I hear some music. It is sweet and grand. I recognise it to be Wagner’s music. I cannot claim it to be mine.

M.: Does Wagner or his music exist apart from you? Unless you are there to say that it is Wagner’s music, can you be aware of it? Without being aware of it, can it be said to exist? To make it more clear, do you recognise Wagner’s music in your deep sleep? And yet you admit that you exist in sleep. So it is clear that Wagner and music are only your thoughts. They are in you and not out of you.

D.: It is beautiful.

[*Compiler’s remarks:* Everyone is apt to be confused from time to time. Although the truth is heard and understood, at times it is forgotten, and mistakes are committed when facts face the person. Knowledge gives place to ignorance and confusion is the result. But the sage alone can give the right turn to our thoughts from time to time. That is the necessity for *Satsanga i.e.*, association with the Wise.]

Talk 610.

A devotee came with these questions.

1. Since individual souls and the Brahman are one, what is the cause of this creation?
2. Is the Brahma-*jnani* liable to bodily pains and rebirth? Can he extend his span of life or curtail it?

M.: The object of creation is to remove the confusion of your individuality. The question shows that you have identified yourself with the body and therefore see yourself and the world around. You think that you are the body. Your mind and intellect are the factors of your wrong identity.

Do you exist in your sleep?

D.: I do.

M.: The same being is now awake and asks these questions. Is it not so?

D.: Yes.

M.: These questions did not arise in your sleep. Did they?

D.: No.

M.: Why not? Because you did not see your body and no thoughts arose. You did not identify yourself with the body then. Therefore these questions did not arise.

They arise now because of your identity with the body. Is it not so?

D.: Yes.

M.: Now see which is your real nature. Is it that which is free from thoughts or that which is full of thoughts?

Being is continuous. The thoughts are discontinuous. So which is permanent?

D.: Being.

M.: That is it. Realise it. That is your true nature. Your nature is simple Being, free from thoughts.

Because you identify yourself with the body you want to know about creation. The world and the objects including your body appear in the waking state but disappear in the state of sleep. You exist all through these states. What is it then that persists through all these states? Find it out. That is your Self.

D.: Supposing it is found, what then?

M.: Find it out and see. There is no use asking hypothetical questions.

D.: Am I then one with Brahman?

M.: Leave Brahman alone. Find who you are. Brahman can take care of Himself.

If you cease to identify yourself with the body no questions regarding creation, birth, death, etc., will arise. They did not arise in your sleep. Similarly they will not arise in the true state of the Self.

The object of creation is thus clear, that you should proceed from where you find yourself and realise your true Being

You could not raise the question in your sleep because there is no creation there. You raise the question now because your thoughts appear and there is creation. Creation is thus found to be only your thoughts.

Take care of yourself and the Brahma-*jnani* will take care of Himself. If you know your true nature, you will understand the state of Brahma-*jnana*. It is futile to explain it now. Because you think that you see a *jnani* before you and you identify him with a body just as you have identified yourself with yours, you also think that he feels pains and pleasures like yourself.

D.: But I must know if he is a *jnani* for I must be inspired by him.

M.: Yes, he tells you; he inspires. Do as he tells you. You want to learn and not test him.

Jnana lakshanas are stated in the *sastras* to be an incentive to a seeker to get rid of misery and seek happiness. The methods are given. If they are followed the result will be *jnana* having those *lakshanas*. They are not meant for testing others.

Talk 611.

D.: I think that the soul is the light within. If after death it becomes one with Brahman how can there be transmigration of soul?

M.: Within whom? Who dies?

D.: I shall then frame my question in a different way.

M.: Dialectics are not wanted. Consider the answer and see.

D.: How?

M.: Now that you identify yourself with the body you say that the soul is the light within. You mean that there is light within the body.

Think a little and say if the body can raise any questions. It is insentient and cannot say 'I'. Something else says 'I'. What is it? Can it be the Self? The Self is pure and is not aware of any other

so as to be able to say 'I'. Who then says 'I'? It is the link between the pure *Chit* (the Self) and the *jada* (the body). That is the ego. Who are you now? What is it that is born? The Self is eternal and cannot be born. The body appears and disappears and your identity with it makes you speak of birth and death. See if the true significance of 'I' can ever take birth. For whom is transmigration?

D.: Sir, we are here to have our doubts cleared.

M.: Certainly.

D.: Our doubts can be cleared only when we ask questions.

M.: Yes. No one objects to questions being asked.

D.: It is said *pariprasnena sevaya* (by questioning again and again and by service). So we should ask questions and the Master should kindly remove our doubts.

M.: Continue your quotation *upadekshyanti tattvam* (They give instructions in Truth).

D.: Yes. But our doubts must be cleared.

M.: So it was with Arjuna. For he says in the end *nashto mohah smritirlabdha* (lost is my ignorance; memory restored).

D.: It was in the end. Before then he asked so many questions.

M.: The Truth was revealed even at the start. For the very first sloka of Sri Krishna's *upadesa* starts: "No birth and no death, no change, etc."

D.: Sri Krishna also says, "We have had many rebirths. I am aware of them; but you are not."

M.: That was only because the question arose how Sri Krishna could claim to have taught the eternal Truth to Aditya. The Truth was stated even at the start. Arjuna did not understand it. The *jnani's* state was later described and also the means of attainment. Incidentally Sri Krishna said that the Truth was eternal and that He had originally taught the same to Aditya. Arjuna was all along identifying himself with the body and therefore thought that Sri Krishna also was the body in front of him. He therefore asked, "How can it be? You (Sri Krishna) were born of Devaki some years before. Aditya was among those who started creation. How could you have taught this Truth to Aditya?"

Sri Krishna continues to answer Arjuna's questions in that strain: "Many rebirths we have had. I know them all; but you do not," and so on.

D.: We must also know the Truth.

M.: You are taught the Truth. Instructions have been given. See who you are. That is the whole instruction.

19th January, 1939

Talk 612.

Mrs. Hick Riddingh asked Sri Bhagavan in writing:

When Bhagavan writes about the help given towards attaining Self-Realisation by the gracious glance of the Master or looking upon the Master, how exactly is this to be understood?"

M.: Who is the Master? Who is the seeker?

D.: The Self.

M.: If the Self be the Master and also the seeker, how can the questions arise at all?

D.: That is just my difficulty. I must seek the Self within myself. What is then the significance of the writing above referred to? It seems contradictory.

M.: It is not. The statement has not been rightly understood.

If the seeker knows the Master to be the Self he sees no duality in other respects either and is therefore happy, so that no questions arise for him.

But the seeker does not bring the truth of the statement to bear in practice. It is because of his ignorance. This ignorance is however unreal. The Master is required to wake up the seeker from the slumber of ignorance and he therefore uses these words in order to make Reality clear to others.

The only thing that matters is that you see the Self. This. can be done wherever you remain. The Self must be sought within. The search must be steadfast. If that is gained there is no need to stay near the Master as a physical being.

The 'statement' is meant for those who cannot find the Self remaining where they are.

Mr. Ward Jackson: The lady's difficulty is real and I sympathise with her. She asks, "If we could see the Self within ourselves, why should we have come all the way to see Him? We had been thinking of Him so long and it is only right that we came here. Is it then unnecessary to do so?"

M.: You have done well in having come. "*Isvaro gururatmeti*" (The Self is the God and Guru). A person seeks happiness and learns that God alone can make one happy. He prays to God and worships Him. God hears his prayers, and responds by appearing in human shape as a Master in order to speak the language of the devotee and make him understand the Reality. The Master is thus God manifest as human being. He gives out His experience so that the seeker might also gain it. His experience is to abide as the Self. The Self is within. God, Master and the Self are therefore seeming stages in the Realisation of the Truth. You have doubts on reading books. You have come here to have them cleared. That is only right.

Mrs. H. R.: I understand the Self to be the Master and must be sought within. So I can do it where I live.

M.: The understanding has been theoretical. When it is put into practice difficulties and doubts arise. If you can feel the presence of the Master where you are, your doubts are readily overcome, for the Master's part consists in removing the doubts of the seeker.

The purpose of your visit is fulfilled if the doubts do not arise hereafter, and you apply yourself steadily in the search for the Self.

D.: I understand it all along.

M.: Good. The objection is not to your conclusion but it is to your doubts.

Mr. W. J.: When we read about it we read it intellectually. But it is all too remote. When we see you in body we are brought nearer to Reality and it gives us courage to bring our knowledge into our everyday life.

If one realised the Self and acted up to it in the West, one would be locked up in a lunatic asylum. (Laughter.)

M.: You will be locking yourself in. Because the world is mad, considers you mad. Where is the lunatic asylum if it is not within. You will not be in it, but it will be in you. (Laughter).

Uncertainties, doubts and fears are natural to everyone until the Self is realised. They are inseparable from the ego, rather they are the ego.

D.: How are they to disappear?

M.: They are the ego. If the ego goes they go with it. The ego is itself unreal. What is the ego? Enquire. The body is insentient and cannot say 'I' . The Self is pure consciousness and non-dual. It cannot say 'I' . No one says, 'I' in sleep. What is the ego then? It is something intermediate between the inert body and the Self. It has no *locus standi*. If sought for it vanishes like a ghost. You see, a man imagines that there is something by his side in darkness; it may be some dark object. If he looks closely the ghost is not to be seen, but some dark object which he could identify as a tree or a post, etc. If he does not look closely the ghost strikes terror in the person. All that is required is only to look closely and the ghost vanishes. The ghost was never there. So also with the ego. It is an intangible link between the body and Pure Consciousness. It is not real. So long as one does not look closely it continues to give trouble. But when one looks for it, it is found not to exist.

Again, in a Hindu marriage function, the feasts continue five or six days. A stranger was mistaken for the best man by the bride's party and they therefore treated him with special regard. Seeing him treated with special regard by the bride's party, the bridegroom's party considered him to be some man of importance related to the bride's party and therefore they too showed him special respect. The stranger had altogether a happy time of it. He was also all along aware of the real situation. On one occasion the groom's party wanted to refer to him on some point. They asked for him. He scented trouble and made himself scarce. So it is with the ego. If looked for, it disappears. If not, it continues to give trouble.

How it is to be looked for is learnt from those who have already done so. That is the reason why the Master is approached.

D.: If the search has to be made within, is it necessary to be in the physical proximity of the Master?

M.: It is necessary to do so until all doubts are at an end.

D.: If the ego is unreal and troublesome why did we take so much pains to develop it?

M.: Its growth and the trouble consequent on such growth make you look for the cause of it all. Its development is for its own destruction.

D.: Is it not said that one must be like a child before one advances spiritually?

M.: Yes, because the ego is not developed in the child.

D.: I mean exactly the same. We could have remained like the child instead of having developed the ego.

M.: The state of the child is meant. No one can take lessons from the child for the Realisation of the Self. The Master's state is like the state of the child. There is a difference between the two. The ego is potential in the child, whereas it is totally destroyed in the saint.

D.: Yes, I see, I understand it now.

M.: The Reality is alone and eternal. To understand it is good enough. But the old ignorance should not return. A good watch must be kept lest the present understanding of the Truth suffers later on.

A disciple served a master a long time and realised the Self. He was in Bliss and wanted to express his gratitude to the master. He was in tears of joy and his voice choked when he spoke. He said, "What a wonder that I did not know my very Self all these years? I suffered long and you so graciously helped me to realise the Self. How shall I repay your Grace? It is not in my power to do it!" The master replied: "Well, well. Your repayment consists in not lapsing into ignorance over again but in continuing in the state of your real Self."

[*Compiler's remarks:* The Self is the Master and all else. The Realisation of the Self means Self-surrender or merging into the Master. What more can anyone do? That is the highest form of gratitude to the Master].

21st January, 1939

Talk 613.

A young man asked: "Are thoughts mere matter?"

M.: What do you mean? Do you mean 'matter' like the things you see around you?

D.: Yes - gross.

M.: Who asks this question? Who is the thinker?

D.: The thinker is spirit.

M.: Do you then mean that spirit generates matter?

D.: I want to know.

M.: How do you distinguish between matter and spirit?

D.: Spirit is consciousness and the other not.

M.: Can consciousness generate non-consciousness, or light darkness?

24th January, 1939

Talk 614.

There were a few respectable men in the hall. Sri Bhagavan spoke to them some time after their arrival. Where is the use of trying to remember the past or discover the future? That which matters is only the present. Take care of it and the other things will take care of themselves.

D.: Is it bad to desire something?

M.: One should not be elated on having his desire fulfilled or disappointed on being frustrated. To be elated on the fulfilment of desire is so deceitful. A gain will certainly be lost ultimately. Therefore elation must end in pain at a future date. One should not give place to feelings of pleasure or pain, come what may. How do the events affect the person? You do not grow by acquiring something nor wither away by losing it. You remain what you always are.

D.: We worldly men cannot resist desire.

M.: You may desire but be prepared for any eventuality. Make effort, but do not be lost in the result. Accept with equanimity whatever happens. For pleasure and pain are mere mental modes. They have no relation to the objective realities.

D.: How?

M.: There were two young friends in a village in South India. They were learned and wanted to earn something with which they might afford relief to their respective families. They took leave of their parents and went to Benares on a pilgrimage. On the way one of them died. The other was left alone. He wandered for a time, and in the course of a few months he made a good name and earned some money. He wanted to earn more before he returned to his home. In the meantime he met

a pilgrim who was going south and would pass through the native village of the young pandit. He requested the new acquaintance to tell his parents that he would return after a few months with some funds and also that his companion had died on the way. The man came to the village and found the parents. He gave them the news, but changed the names of the two men. Consequently the parents of the living man bemoaned his supposed loss and the parents of the dead man were happy expecting the return of their son bringing rich funds as well.

You see therefore that pleasure and pain have no relation to the actualities but are mere mental modes.

Talk 615.

Another from the group asked: How is the ego to be destroyed?

M.: Hold the ego first and then ask how it is to be destroyed. Who asks this question? It is the ego. Can the ego ever agree to kill itself? This question is a sure way to cherish the ego and not to kill it. If you seek the ego you will find it does not exist. That is the way to destroy it.

In this connection I am often reminded of a funny incident which took place when I was living in the West Chitrai Street in Madura. A neighbour in an adjoining house anticipated the visit of a thief to his house. He took precautions to catch him. He posted policemen in mufti to guard the two ends of the lane, the entrance and the back-door to his own house. The thief came as expected and the men rushed to catch him. He took in the situation at a glance and shouted "Hold him, hold him. There - he runs - there - there." Saying so he made good his escape.

So it is with the ego. Look for it and it will not be found. That is the way to get rid of it.

23rd to 28th January, 1939

Talk 616.

D.: Is the *Jivanadi* an entity or a figment of the imagination?

M.: The *yogis* say that there is a *nadi* called the *jivanadi, atmanadi* or *paranadi*. The Upanishads speak of a centre from which thousands of *nadis* branch off. Some locate such a centre in the brain and others in other centres. The *Garbhopanishad* traces the formation of the foetus and the growth of the child in the womb. The *jiva* is

considered to enter the child through the fontanelle in the seventh month of its growth. In evidence thereof it is pointed out that the fontanelle is tender in a baby and is also seen to pulsate. It takes some months for it to ossify. Thus the *jiva* comes from above, enters through the fontanelle and works through the thousands of the *nadis* which are spread over the whole body. Therefore the seeker of Truth must concentrate on the *sahasrara*, that is the brain, in order to regain his source. *Pranayama* is said to help the *yogi* to rouse the *Kundalini Sakti* which lies coiled in the solar plexus. The *sakti* rises through a nerve called the *Sushumna*, which is imbedded in the core of the spinal cord and extends to the brain.

If one concentrates on the *Sahasrara* there is no doubt that the ecstasy of *samadhi* ensues. The *vasanas*, that is the latencies, are not however destroyed. The *yogi* is therefore bound to wake up from the *samadhi*, because release from bondage has not yet been accomplished. He must still try to eradicate the *vasanas* in order that the latencies yet inherent in him may not disturb the peace of his *samadhi*. So he passes down from the *sahasrara* to the heart through what is called the *jivanadi*, which is only a continuation of the *Sushumna*. The *Sushumna* is thus a curve. It starts from the solar plexus, rises through the spinal cord to the brain and from there bends down and ends in the heart. When the *yogi* has reached the heart, the *samadhi* becomes permanent. Thus we see that the heart is the final centre.

Some Upanishads also speak of 101 nadis which spread from the heart, one of them being the vital *nadi*. If the *jiva* comes down from above and gets reflected in the brain, as the *yogis* say, there must be a reflecting surface in action. That must also be capable of limiting the Infinite Consciousness to the limits of the body. In short the Universal Being becomes limited as a *jiva*. Such reflecting medium is furnished by the aggregate of the *vasanas* of the individual. It acts like the water in a pot which reflects the image of an object. If the pot be drained of its water there will be no reflection. The object will remain without being reflected. The object here is the Universal Being-Consciousness which is all-pervading and therefore immanent in all. It need not be cognised by reflection alone; it is self-resplendent. Therefore the seeker's aim must be to drain away the *vasanas* from the heart and let no reflection obstruct the Light of Eternal Consciousness. This is

achieved by the search for the origin of the ego and by diving into the heart. This is the direct method for Self-Realisation. One who adopts it need not worry about *nadis*, the brain, the *Sushumna*, the *Paranadi*, the *Kundalini*, *pranayama* or the six centres.

The Self does not come from anywhere else and enter the body through the crown of the head. It is as it is, ever sparkling, ever steady, unmoving and unchanging. The changes which are noticed are not inherent in the Self which abides in the Heart and is self-luminous like the Sun. The changes are seen in Its Light. The relation between the Self and the body or the mind may be compared to that of a clear crystal and its background. If the crystal is placed against a red flower, it shines red; if placed against a green leaf it shines green, and so on. The individual confines himself to the limits of the changeful body or of the mind which derives its existence from the unchanging Self. All that is necessary is to give up this mistaken identity, and that done, the ever-shining Self will be seen to be the single non-dual Reality.

The reflection of Consciousness is said to be in the subtle body (*sukshma sarira*), which appears to be composed of the brain and the nerves radiating from it to all parts of the trunk, chiefly through the spinal column and the solar plexus.

When I was on the Hill, Nayana (Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni) once argued that the brain was the seat of the *vasanas*, because it consisted of innumerable cells in which the *vasanas* were contained and illuminated by the light of the Self which projected from the heart. Only this set a person working or thinking.

But I said, “How can it be so? The *vasanas* must be with one’s Self and can never remain away from the Self. If, as you say, the *vasanas* be contained in the brain and the Heart is the seat of the Self, a person who is decapitated must be rid of his *vasanas* and should not be reborn. You agree that it is absurd. Now can you say that the Self is in the brain with the *vasanas*? If so, why should the head bend down when one falls asleep? Moreover a person does not touch his head and say ‘I’. Therefore it follows that the Self is in the Heart and the *vasanas* are also there in an exceedingly subtle form.

“When the *vasanas* are projected from the Heart they are associated with the Light of the Self and the person is said to think. The

vasanas which lie imbedded in an atomic condition grow in size in their passage from the heart to the brain. The brain is the screen on which the images of the *vasanas* are thrown and it is also the place of their functional distribution. The brain is the seat of the mind, and the mind works through it."

So then this is what happens. When a *vasana* is released and it comes into play, it is associated with the light of the Self. It passes from the heart to the brain and on its way it grows more and more until it holds the field all alone and all the *vasanas* are thus kept in abeyance for the time being. When the thought is reflected in the brain it appears as an image on a screen. The person is then said to have a clear perception of things. He is a great thinker or discoverer. Neither the thought that is extolled as being original, nor the thing, nor the country which is claimed to be a new discovery, is really original or new. It could not manifest unless it was already in the mind. It was of course very subtle and remained imperceptible, because it lay repressed by the more urgent or insistent thoughts or *vasanas*. When they have spent themselves this thought arises and by concentration the Light of the Self makes it clear, so that it appears magnificent, original and revolutionary. In fact it was only within all along.

This concentration is called *samyamana* in the Yoga *Sastras*. One's desires can be fulfilled by this process and it is said to be a *siddhi*. It is how the so-called new discoveries are made. Even worlds can be created in this manner. *Samyamana* leads to all *siddhis*. But they do not manifest so long as the ego lasts. Concentration according to yoga ends in the destruction of the experiencer (ego), experience and the world, and then the quondam desires get fulfilled in due course. This concentration bestows on individuals even the powers of creating new worlds. It is illustrated in the *Aindava Upakhyana* in the *Yoga Vasishta* and in the *Ganda Saila Loka* in the *Tripura Rahasya.*

Although the powers appear to be wonderful to those who do not possess them, yet they are only transient. It is useless to aspire for that which is transient. All these wonders are contained in the one changeless Self. The world is thus within and not without. This meaning is contained in verses 11 and 12 - Chapter V of *Sri Ramana Gita* "The entire Universe is condensed in the body, and the entire body in the

Heart. Thus the Heart is the nucleus of the whole Universe." Therefore *Samyamana* relates to concentration on different parts of the body for the different *siddhis*. Also the *Visva* or the *Virat* is said to contain the cosmos within the limits of the body. Again, "The world is not other than the mind, the mind is not other than the Heart; that is the whole truth." So the Heart comprises all. This is what is taught to Svetaketu by the illustration of the seed of a fig tree. The source is a point without any dimensions. It expands as the cosmos on the one hand and as Infinite Bliss on the other. That point is the pivot. From it a single *vasana* starts, multiplies as the experiencer 'I', experience, and the world. The experiencer and the source are referred to in the *mantra*. Two birds, exactly alike, arise simultaneously.

When I was staying in the Skandasramam I sometimes used to go out and sit on a rock. On one such occasion there were two or three others with me including Rangaswami Iyengar. Suddenly we noticed some small moth-like insect shooting up like a rocket into the air from a crevice in the rock. Within the twinkling of an eye it had multiplied itself into millions of moths which formed a cloud and hid the sky from view. We wondered at it and examined the place from which it shot up. We found that it was only a pinhole and knew that so many insects could not have issued from it in such a short time.

That is how *ahankara* (ego) shoots up like a rocket and instantaneously spreads out as the Universe.

The Heart is therefore the centre. A person can never be away from it. If he is he is already dead. Although the Upanishads say that the *jiva* functions through other centres on different occasions, yet he does not relinquish the Heart. The centres are simply places of business (vide *Vedanta Chudamani*). The Self is bound to the Heart, like a cow tethered to a peg. The movements are controlled by the length of the rope. All its wanderings centre around the peg.

A caterpillar crawls on a blade of grass and when it has come to the end, it seeks another support. While doing so it holds on with its hind-legs to the blade of grass, lifts the body and sways to and fro before it can hold another. Similarly it is with the Self. It stays in the Heart and holds other centres also according to circumstances. But its activities always centre round the Heart.

Talk 617.

There are five states for the individual. They are: (1) *Jagrat*, (2) *Swapna*, (3) *Sushupti*, (4) *Turiya*, (5) *Turyatita*. Of these the *jagrat* is the waking state.

In it the *jiva* in the *Visva* aspect and the Lord in the *Virat* aspect, abiding together in the eight petals of the Heart lotus, function through the eyes and enjoy novel pleasures from various objects by means of all the senses, organs, etc. The five gross elements which are widespread, the ten senses, the five vital airs, the four inner faculties, the twenty-four fundamentals - all these together form the gross body. The *jagrat* state is characterised by *satva guna* denoted by the letter *A* and presided over by the deity Vishnu. The *swapna* is the dream state in which the *jiva* in the *Taijasa* aspect and the Lord in the *Hiranyagarbha* aspect, abiding together in the corolla of the Heart-Lotus, function in the neck and experience through the mind the results of the impressions collected in the waking state. All the principles, the five gross elements, the will and the intellect, seventeen in all, together form the subtle body of the dream which is characterised by the *rajo guna* denoted by the letter *U* and presided over by the deity Brahma, so say the wise.

The *sushupti* is the state of deep sleep in which the *jiva* in the *Prajna* aspect and the Lord in the *Isvara* aspect, abiding together in the stamen of the Heart-Lotus, experience the bliss of the Supreme by means of the subtle *avidya* (nescience). Just as a hen after roaming about in the day calls the chicks to her, enfolds them under her wings and goes to rest for the night, so also the subtle individual being, after finishing the experiences of the *jagrat* and *swapna* for the time being, enters with the impressions gathered during those states into the causal body which is made up of nescience, characterised by *tamo guna*, denoted by the letter *M* and presided over by the deity Rudra.

Deep sleep is nothing but the experience of pure *being*. The three states go by different names, such as the three regions, the three forts, the three deities, etc. The being always abides in the Heart, as stated above. If in the *jagrat* state the Heart is not relinquished, the mental activities are stilled and Brahman alone is contemplated, the state is called the *Turiya*. Again when the individual being merges in the Supreme it is called the *turyatita*. The vegetable kingdom is always in *sushupti*; the

animals have both *swapna* and *sushupti*; the gods (celestials) are always in *jagrat*; man has all the three states; but the clear-sighted yogi abides only in *turiya*, and the highest yogi remains in *turyatita* alone.

The three states alternate involuntarily for the average man. The last two (*turiya* and *turyatita*) are however the results of practice and form clear aids to liberation. Of the other three states (*Jagrat, swapna* and *sushupti*) each one is exclusive of the other two and limited by the conditions of time and space. They are therefore unreal.

Our very experience of the *jagrat* and the *swapna* states proves that the Consciousness as the Self underlies all the five states, remains perfect all along and witnesses all of them. But with regard to similar consciousness in the deep sleep, every person is known to say "I was not aware of anything; I slept soundly and happily". Two facts emerge from the statement (unawareness of anything and the happiness of sound sleep). Unless these existed and were experienced in sleep they could not find expression by the same person in the waking state. Inference also leads to the same conclusion. Just as the eye sees the darkness which remains enveloping all objects, so also the Self sees the darkness of nescience which remained covering the phenomenal world.

This darkness was experienced when it (the Self) emerged in dots of supreme bliss, shone a trice and fleeted away in such fine subtlety as the rays of the moon which peer through the waving foliage. The experience was however not through any media (such as the senses of the mind), but bears out the fact that consciousness does exist in deep sleep. The unawareness is owing to the absence of relative knowledge, and the happiness to the absence of (seething) thoughts.

If the experience of bliss in deep sleep is a fact, how is it that no one among all the human beings recollects it? A diver who has found the desired thing under water cannot make his discovery known to the expectant persons on the shore until he emerges from the water. Similarly the sleeper cannot express his experience because he cannot contact the organs of expression until he is awakened by his *vasanas* in due course. Therefore it follows that the Self is the light of *Sat, Chit, Ananda.*

Visva, *Taijasa* and *Prajna* are the denominations of the experiencer in the waking, dream and deep sleep states respectively. The same individual

underlies all of them. They do not therefore represent the True Self which is pure *Sat, Chit, Ananda*. The experience in deep sleep was said to be the bliss of Brahman. It is only the negative aspect of such bliss, as it is the result of the absence of thoughts. Moreover it is transitory. Such a bliss is only the *abhasa*, the counterfeit of Supreme Bliss. It is not different from the blissful feeling of sensual pleasures. In deep sleep the *Prajna* is said to be united with the Self. So the individuality is potential in sleep.

The Self is the basis of all the experiences. It remains as the witness and the support of them all. The Reality is thus different from the three states, the waking, the dream and the deep sleep.

1st February, 1939

Talk 618.

A gentleman from Hardwar: When I go on analysing myself I go beyond the intellect, and then there is no happiness.

M.: Intellect is only an instrument of the Self. It cannot help you to know what is beyond itself.

D.: I understand it. But there is no happiness beyond it.

M.: The intellect is the instrument wherewith to know unknown things. But you are already known, being the Self which is itself knowledge; so you do not become the object of knowledge. The intellect makes you see things outside, and not that which is its own source.

D.: The question is repeated.

M.: The intellect is useful thus far, it helps you to analyse yourself, and no further. It must then be merged into the ego, and the source of the ego must be sought. If that be done the ego disappears. Remain as that source and then the ego does not arise

D.: There is no happiness in that state.

M.: 'There is no happiness' is only a thought. The Self is bliss, pure and simple. You are the Self. So you cannot but be bliss; being so, you cannot say here is no happiness. That which says so cannot be the Self; it is the non-Self and must be got rid of in order to realise the bliss of the Self.

D.: How is that to be done?

M.: See wherefrom the thought arises. It is the mind. See for whom the mind or intellect functions. For the ego. Merge the intellect in the ego and seek the source of the ego. The ego disappears. 'I know' and 'I do not know' imply a subject and an object. They are due to duality. The Self is pure and absolute, One and alone. There are no two selves so that one may know the other. What is duality then? It cannot be the Self which is One and alone. It must be non-Self. Duality is the characteristic of the ego. When thoughts arise duality is present; know it to be the ego, and seek its source.

The degree of the absence of thoughts is the measure of your progress towards Self-Realisation. But Self-Realisation itself does not admit of progress; it is ever the same. The Self remains always in realisation. The obstacles are thoughts. Progress is measured by the degree of removal of the obstacles to understanding that the Self is always realised. So thoughts must be checked by seeking to whom they arise. So you go to their Source, where they do not arise.

D.: Doubts are always arising. Hence my question.

M.: A doubt arises and is cleared; another arises and that is cleared, making way for another, and so it goes on. So there is no possibility of clearing away all doubts. See to *whom* the doubts arise. Go to their source and abide in it. Then they cease to arise. That is how doubts are to be cleared. *Atma samstham manah krtva na kinchidapi chintayet*.

D.: Grace alone can help me to it.

M.: Grace is not exterior. In fact your very desire for grace is due to grace that is already in you.

Talk 619.

An Andhra gentleman read out a verse from the *Viveka Chudamani* setting forth the sense of the *Maitreyi Brahmana* of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* and asked the meaning of *atma* which occurred there.

M.: The Self.

D.: Is not *prema* (love) for something else?

M.: The desire for happiness (*sukha prema*) is a proof of the ever-existing happiness of the Self. Otherwise how can desire for it arise in you? If headache was natural to human beings no one would try

to get rid of it. But everyone that has a headache tries to get rid of it, because he has known a time when he had no headache. He desires only that which is natural to him. So too he desires happiness because happiness is natural to him. Being natural, it is not acquired. Man's attempts can only be to get rid of misery. If that be done the ever-present bliss is felt. The primal bliss is obscured by the non-self which is synonymous with non-bliss or misery. *Duhkha nasam = sukha prapti.* (Loss of unhappiness amounts to gain of happiness.) Happiness mixed with misery is only misery. When misery is eliminated then the ever-present bliss is said to be gained. Pleasure which ends in pain is misery. Man wants to eschew such pleasure. Pleasures are *priya*, *moda* and *pra-moda*. When a desired object is near at hand there arises *priya*: when it is taken possession of *moda* arises; when it is being enjoyed *pra-moda* prevails. The reason for the pleasureableness of these states is that *one thought excludes all others, and then this single thought also merges into the Self*. These states are enjoyed in the *Anandamaya kosa* only. As a rule *Vijnanamaya kosa* prevails on waking. In deep sleep all thoughts disappear and the state of obscuration is one of bliss; there the prevailing body is the *Anandamaya*. These are sheaths and not the core, which is interior to all these. It lies beyond waking, dream and deep sleep. That is the Reality and consists of true bliss (*nijananda*).

D.: Is not *hatha* yoga necessary for the inquiry into the Self?

M.: Each one finds some one method suitable to himself, because of latent tendencies (*purva samskara*).

D.: Can *hatha* yoga be accomplished at my age?

M.: Why do you think of all that? Because you think it exterior to yourself you desire it and try for it. But do you not exist all along? Why do you leave yourself and go after something external?

D.: It is said in *Aparoksha-anubhuti* that *hatha* yoga is a necessary aid for inquiry into the Self.

M.: The *hatha* yogis claim to keep the body fit so that the enquiry may be effected without obstacles. They also say that life must be prolonged so that the enquiry may be carried to a successful end. Furthermore there are those who use some medicines (*kayakalpa*) with that end in view. Their favourite example is: the screen must

be perfect before the painting is begun. Yes, but *which is the screen and which the painting*? According to them the body is the screen and the inquiry into the Self is the painting. But is not the body itself a picture on the screen, the Self?

D.: But *hatha* yoga is so much spoken of as an aid.

M.: Yes. Even great pandits well versed in the Vedanta continue the practice of it. Otherwise their minds will not subside. So you may say it is useful for those who cannot otherwise still the mind.

D.: *Saguna upasana* (worship of the personal God) is said to be imperfect. It is also said that *nirguna upasana* (devotion to the impersonal) is hard and risky. I am fit for the former only. What is to be done?

M.: The *Saguna* merges into the *nirguna* in the long run. The *saguna* purifies the mind and takes one to the final goal. The afflicted one, the seeker of knowledge, and the seeker of gains are all dear to God. *But the jnani is the Self of God*.

Talk 620.

D.: "Not this - not this". That is the teaching to the seeker. He is told that the Self is Supreme. How is it to be found?

M.: The Self is said to be the hearer, thinker, knower, etc. But that is not all. It is also described as the ear of ear, the mind of mind, etc.; and by what means to know the knower?

D.: But this does not say what the Self is.

M.: "Not this - not this".

D.: It only negates.

M.: (Silence).

The devotee complains that the Self is not pointed out.

M.: A man wants to know what he is. He sees animals and objects around him. He is told: 'You are not a cow, not a horse, not a tree, not this, not that, and so on'. If again the man asks saying 'You have not said what I am,' the answer will be, 'It is not said you are not a man'. He must find out for himself that he is a man. So you must find out for yourself what you are.

You are told, 'You are not this body, nor the mind, nor the intellect, nor the ego, nor anything you can think of; find out what truly you are'. Silence denotes that the questioner is himself the Self that is to be found. In a *svayamvara* the maiden goes on saying 'no' to each one until she faces her choice and then she looks downwards and remains silent.

Talk 621.

Mr. Raj Krishna found Sri Bhagavan alone on the Hill at about 5-30 p.m. and prayed: I have been desiring since my tenth year to have a glimpse of the Reality. I firmly believe that I can be helped in this only by a sage like Sri Bhagavan. So I pray for Thy help.

Sri Bhagavan looked at him for a few minutes. The devotee interrupted, saying: "Even if I cannot realise in my life let me at least not forget it on my death bed: let me have a glimpse at least at the moment of death so that it may stand me in good stead in the future."

M.: It is said in the Bhagavad Gita, Ch. VIII, that whatever may be the last thought at death, it determines the later birth of the person. It is necessary to experience the Reality now in life in order that it may be experienced at death. See if this moment be different from the last one, and try to be in that desired state.

D.: I have limitations. I am unable to rise to the occasion. Grace can achieve for me what I cannot achieve myself.

M.: True, but unless there is grace this desire will not arise.

They were walking slowly, conversing at the same time. The devotee said: "There is a girl of eleven in Lahore. She is very remarkable. She says she can call upon Krishna twice and remain conscious, but if she calls the third time she becomes unconscious and remains in trance for ten hours continuously."

M.: So long as you think that Krishna is different from you, you call upon Him. Falling into trance denotes the transitoriness of the *samadhi*. You are always in *samadhi; that is what should be realised*.

D.: God-vision is glorious.

M.: God-vision is only vision of the Self objectified as the God of one's own faith. Know the Self.

Talk 622.

Sri Bhagavan has a bandage on his finger. Someone asked, “What is that?” Bhagavan replied: “The finger came upon a knife”. (The Knife is inert, and relative to it the finger is a conscious agent).

Talk 623.

Sri Bhagavan said to another devotee that there are five states:

(1) Sleep, (2) Before waking, a state free from thoughts, (3) Sense of happiness of that freedom from thoughts (*rasasvada*), (4) The internal movement of the *vasanas* (*kashaya*) and (5) Complete waking with (distraction) *vikshepa*. The second of those should be made permanent.

4th February, 1939

Talk 624.

A devotee asked Sri Bhagavan: With every thought the subject and the object appear and disappear. Does not the ‘I’ disappear when the subject disappears thus? If that be so how can the quest of the ‘I’ proceed?

M.: The subject (knower) is only a mode of mind. Though the mode (*vritti*) passes, the reality behind it does not cease. The background of the mode is the ‘I’ in which the mind modes arise and sink.

D.: After describing the Self as *srota* (hearer), *manta* (thinker), *vijnata* (knower), etc., it is again described as *asrota, amanta, avijnata*, non-hearer, non-thinker, non-knower, Is it so?

M.: Just so. The common man is aware of himself only when modifications arise in the intellect (*vijnanamaya kosa*); these modifications are transient; they arise and set. Hence the *vijnanamaya* (intellect) is called a *kosa* or sheath. When pure awareness is left over it is itself the *Chit* (Self) or the Supreme. To be in one’s natural state on the subsidence of thoughts is bliss; if that bliss be transient - arising and setting - then it is only the *sheath* of bliss (*Anandamaya kosa*), not the pure Self. What is needed is to fix the attention on the pure ‘I’ after the subsidence of all thoughts and not to lose hold of it. This has to be described as an extremely subtle thought; else it cannot be spoken of at all, since it is no other than the Real Self. Who is to speak of it, to whom and how?

This is well explained in the *Kaivalyam* and the *Viveka Chudamani*. Thus though in sleep the awareness of the Self is not lost, the ignorance of the *jiva* is not affected by it. For this ignorance to be destroyed this subtle state of mind (*vrittijnanam*) is necessary; in the sunshine cotton does not burn; but if the cotton be placed under a lens it catches fire and is consumed by the rays of the Sun passing through the lens. So too, though the awareness of the Self is present at all times, it is not inimical to ignorance. If by meditation the subtle state of thought is won, then ignorance is destroyed. Also in *Viveka Chudamani: ativa sukshmam paramatma tattvam na sthoola drishtya* (the exceedingly subtle Supreme Self cannot be seen by the gross eye) and *esha svayam jyotirasesha sakshi* (this is Self-shining and witnesses all).

This subtle mental state is not a modification of mind called *vritti*. Because the mental states are of two kinds. One is the *natural state* and the other is a transformation into forms of objects. The first is the truth, and the other is according to the doer (*kartru-tantra*). When the latter perishes, *jale kataka renuvat* (like the clearing nut paste in water) the former will remain over.

The means for this end is meditation. Though this is with the triad of distinction (*triputi*) it will finally end in pure awareness (*jnanam*) Meditation needs effort: *jnanam* is effortless. Meditation can be done, or not done, or wrongly done, *jnanam* is not so. Meditation is described as *kartru-tantra* (as doer's own), *jnanam* as *vastu-tantra* (the Supreme's own).

7th February, 1939

Talk 625.

Miss Merston, an English lady visitor: I have read *Who am I*? While inquiring who the 'I' is, I cannot hold it for any length of time. Secondly, I have no interest in the environment, but yet I have hopes that I shall find some interest in life.

M.: If there are no interests it is good. (The interpreter points out that the questioner hopes to find some interest in life).

M.: That means there are those *vasanas*. A dreamer dreams a dream. He sees the dream world with pleasures, pains. etc. But he wakes up and then loses all interest in the dream world. So it is with the

waking world also. Just as the dream-world, being only a part of yourself and not different from you, ceases to interest you, so also the present world would cease to interest you if you awake from this waking dream (*samsara*) and realise that it is a part of your Self, and not an objective reality.

Because you think that you are apart from the objects around you, you desire a thing. But if you understand that the thing was only a thought-form you would no longer desire it.

All things are like bubbles on water. You are the water and the objects are the bubbles. They cannot exist apart from the water, but they are not quite the same as the water.

D.: I feel I am like froth.

M.: Cease that identification with the unreal and know your real identity. Then you will be firm and no doubts can arise.

D.: But I *am* the froth.

M.: Because you think that way there is worry. It is a wrong imagination. Accept your true identity with the Real. Be the water and not the froth. That is done by diving in.

D.: If I dive in, I shall find........

M.: But even without diving in, *you are That*. The ideas of exterior and interior exist only so long as you do not accept your real identity.

D.: But I took the idea from you that you want me to dive in.

M.: Yes, quite right. It was said because you are identifying yourself with the froth and not the water. Because of this confusion the answer was meant to draw your attention to this confusion and bring it home to you. All that is meant is that the Self is infinite inclusive of all that you see. There is nothing beyond It nor apart from It. Knowing this, you will not desire anything; not desiring, you will be content.

The Self is always realised. There is no seeking to realise what is already - always - realised. For you cannot deny your own existence. That existence is consciousness - the Self.

Unless you exist you cannot ask questions. So you must admit your own existence. That existence is the Self. It is already realised.

Therefore the effort to realise results only in your realising your present mistake - that you have not realised your Self. There is no fresh realisation. The Self becomes revealed.

D.: That will take some years.

M.: Why years? The idea of time is only in your mind. It is not in the Self. There is no time for the Self. Time arises as an idea after the ego arises. But you are the Self beyond time and space; you exist even in the absence of time and space.

9th February, 1939

Talk 626.

Another devotee: Is it not that the 'I' exists only in relation to a 'this' (*aham* - *idam*)?

M.: 'I', 'this' appear together now. But 'this' is contained (*vyaptam*) in the 'I' - they are not apart. 'This' has to merge into and become one with 'I'. The 'I' that remains over is the true 'I'.

Talk 627.

D.: What is staying with the Guru?

M.: It means studying the sacred lore.

D.: But there is the special virtue of the Guru's presence.

M.: Yes. That purifies the mind.

D.: That is the effect or reward. I asked about how the disciple ought to behave.

M.: That differs according to the type of disciple - student, householder, what are his own ingrained mental tendencies and so on.

D.: If so, will it naturally come out right?

M.: Yes. In former times the Rishis sent their sons to others for education.

D.: Why?

M.: Because affection stood in the way.

D.: That cannot be for the *jnanis*. Was it in respect of the disciples?

M.: Yes.

D.: If so would not this obstacle get removed along with all the others, through the Master's grace?

M.: There will be delay. Owing to the disciple's want of reverence, grace may become effective only after a long time.

It is said that awaking from ignorance is like awaking from a fearful dream of a beast. It is thus. There are two taints of mind, namely veiling and restlessness (*avarana* and *vikshepa*). Of the two, the former is evil, the latter is not so. So long as the veiling effect of sleep persists there is the frightful dream; on awaking the veiling ceases; and there is no more fear. Restlessness is not a bar to happiness. To get rid of the restlessness caused by the world, one seeks the restlessness (activity) of being with the Guru, studying the sacred books and worshipping God with forms, and by these awakening is attained.

What happens in the end? Karna was ever the son of Kunti. The tenth man was such all along. Rama was Vishnu all the time. Such is *jnanam*. It is being aware of That which always is.

13th February, 1939

Talk 628.

After his return from Europe, Mr. D. had a private interview with Sri Bhagavan for a few minutes. He said that his former visit had had some effect but not as much as he wanted. He could concentrate on his work. Is not concentration indispensable for spiritual progress? Karma appealed to him because that helped towards concentration.

Sri Bhagavan: There is no karma without a *karta* (doer). On seeking for the doer he disappears. Where is Karma then?

Mr. D. sought practical instruction.

M.: Seek the *karta.* That is the practice.

Mrs. D. said there were breaks in her awareness and desired to know how the awareness might be made continuous.

M.: Breaks are due to thoughts. You cannot be aware of breaks unless you think so. It is only a thought. Repeat the old practice, "To whom do thoughts arise?" Keep up the practice until there are no breaks. Practice alone will bring about continuity of awareness.

17th February, 1939

Talk 629.

This is Sivaratri day. Sri Bhagavan was beaming with Grace in the evening. A *Sadhaka* raised the following question:

D.: Enquiry into the Self seems to take one into the subtle body (*ativahika sariram* or *puriashtakam* or *jivatma*). Am I right?

M.: They are different names for the same state, but they are used according to the different points of view. After some time *puriashtakam* (the eight fold subtle body) will disappear and there will be the '*Eka*' (one) only.

Vritti jnana alone can destroy '*ajnana*' (ignorance). Absolute *jnana* is not inimical to *ajnana*.

There are two kinds of *vrittis* (modes of mind). (1) *vishaya vritti* (objective) and (2) *atma vritti* (subjective). The first must give place to the second.

That is the aim of *abhyasa* (practice), which takes one first to the *puriashtaka* and then to the One Self.

Talk 630.

In the course of conversation a devotee said in passing: Sivaprakasam Pillai, who is such a good man, such an ardent devotee and a longstanding disciple, has written a poem saying that Sri Bhagavan's instructions could not be carried out by him effectively in practice. What can be the lot of others then?

M.: Sri Acharya also says similar things when he composes songs in praise of any deity. How else can they praise God?

Saying this Sri Bhagavan smiled.

Talk 631.

The *Sadhaka* repeated his question in a different way:

D.: The enquiry into the Self seems to lead to the *ativahika*, the *puriashtaka* or the *jivatma*. Is it right?

M.: Yes. It is called '*sarira*' (body or abode, city or individual, *puri* or *jiva* according to the outlook). They are the same.

Vritti-jnanam is usually associated with objective phenomena. When these cease there remains the *atma-vritti* or the subjective *vritti* that is the same as *jnanam*. Without it *ajnanam* will not cease. The *puriashtaka* also will not be found associated with anything outside, and the Self will shine forth uniform and harmonious.

18th February, 1939

Talk 632.

Mr. Satyanarayana Rao, a teacher in Vellore Mahant School, is a well-known devotee of Sri Maharshi. He has been ailing from a cancer of the gullet and the doctors have no hopes for him. He has been given a room in the Asramam and the Sarvadhikari is very kind to him. It is now about two months and the patient is very weak.

At about 9 a.m., Sri Bhagavan was reading the *tapals*. The brother of the patient appeared in the hall with an anxious look to ask Sri Bhagavan about the patient, who was gasping. The Sarvadhikari also came to the hall on behalf of the sufferer. Sri Bhagavan continued to read the *tapals*. In a few minutes another devotee also came there for the same purpose. Sri Bhagavan asked: Did you call the doctor?

D.: Yes, but he is too busy in the hospital.

M.: What can I do? (After a short time) They will be pleased if I go there.

Soon Bhagavan left the hall and went to the patient's side, massaged him gently and placed His hand on the heart and the other on his head. The patient, whose tongue was protruding, mouth open and eyes fixed, showed signs of relief and in about twenty minutes gently murmured, "Oh Help of the helpless, how I have troubled Thee! What return can I make for this kindness?" The people felt relieved. Sri Bhagavan returned to the hall. Someone offered soap and water to Sri Bhagavan to wash his hands. *But he declined them and rubbed His hands over His body*. However the patient passed away a few days later.

A well-known devotee remarked: "Sri Bhagavan appears so unconcerned under all circumstances. But He is all along so loving and gracious."

23rd February, 1939

Talk 633.

A visitor from Dindigul said: I suffer in both mind and body. From the day of my birth I have never had happiness. My mother too suffered from the time she conceived me, I hear. Why do I suffer thus? I have not sinned in this life. Is all this due to the sins of past lives?

M.: If there should be unrelieved suffering all the time, who would seek happiness? That is, if suffering be the natural state, how can the desire to be happy arise at all? However the desire does arise. So to be happy is natural; all else is unnatural. Suffering is not desired, only because it comes and goes.

The questioner repeated his complaint.

M.: You say the mind and body suffer. But do they ask the questions? *Who is the questioner*? Is it not the one that is beyond both mind and body?

You say the body suffers in *this* life; the cause of this is the previous life: its cause is the one before it, and so on. So, like the case of the *seed and the sprout*, there is no end to the causal series. It has to be said that all the lives have their first cause in ignorance. That same ignorance is present even now, framing this question. That ignorance must be removed by *jnanam*.

"Why and to whom did this suffering come?" If you question thus you will find that the 'I' is separate from the mind and body, that the Self is the only eternal being, and that It is eternal bliss. That is *jnanam*.

D.: But why should there be suffering now?

M.: If there were no suffering how could the desire to be happy arise? If that desire did not arise how would the Quest of the Self be successful?

D.: Then is all suffering good?

M.: Quite so. What is happiness? Is it a healthy and handsome body, timely meals, and the like? Even an emperor has troubles without end though he may be healthy. So all suffering is due to the false notion "I am the body". Getting rid of it is *jnanam*.

Talk 634.

An Andhra gentleman, retired from Government Service, asked: “I have been doing *omkara upasana* for long. In the left ear I am always hearing a sound. It is like the piping of a *nadasvaram* (pipe). Even now I hear it. Some luminous visions are also seen. I do not know what I should do.”

M.: There must be one to hear sounds or see visions. That one is the ‘I’. If you seek it, asking “Who am I?” the subject and objects would coalesce. After that there is no quest. Till then thought will arise, things will appear and disappear; you ask yourself what has happened, and what will happen. If the subject be known then the objects will merge in the subject. If without that knowledge, one applies the mind to objects, because these objects appear and disappear, and one does not know that one’s true nature is that which remains over as the Self. On the vanishing of objects, fear arises. That is, the mind being bound to objects there is suffering when the objects are absent. But they are transient and the Self is eternal. If the eternal Self be known subject and object merge into one, and the One without a second will shine.

D.: Is there the merger of the *Omkara*?

M.: Om is the eternal truth. That which remains over after the disappearance of objects is *Om*. It does not merge in anything. It is the State of which it is said: “Where one sees none other, hears none other, knows none other, that is Perfection.” *Yatra nanyat pasyati, nanyat srunoti, nanyat vijanati sa bhuma*? All the *upasanas* are ways to winning it. One must not get stuck in the *upasanas*, but must query “Who am I?” and find the Self.

D.: I have no pleasure in the house. There remains nothing for me to do in the family. I have finished doing what I had to do. Now there are grandsons and granddaughters. May I remain in the house, or should I leave it and go away?

M.: You should stay just where you are now. But where are you now? Are you in the house, or is the house in you? Is there any house apart from you? If you get fixed in your own place, you will see all things have merged into you, and there will be no cause for such questions as these.

D.: Yes. Then it seems as if I may remain at home.

M.: You must remain in your real state.

Talk 635.

An Andhra gentleman of Hospet has returned from pilgrimage to Kailas, Amarnath, etc. He described how fine those places are and how difficult the journey was. He finally asked for something to remind him of Maharshi, meaning some instruction.

M.: You have been to Kailas etc. Have you been to Muktinath?

D.: No. It was too difficult a journey for me. I have however been in Nepal. Have you been to those places?

M.: No, no. I mentioned Muktinath casually.

Then Sri Bhagavan remarked: "To go to Kailas and return is just a new birth. For there the body-idea drops off."

Talk 636.

Mrs. Kelly Hack asked if the waking and the dream states might be imagined to be excursions from the natural state of the Self.

M.: There must be a place for excursions. The place must also lie outside oneself. It is not possible in the true nature of the Self.

D.: But I meant that it might be imagined to be so.

M.: One might as well imagine the true nature of the Self

D.: The illustration of the screen is very beautiful.

M.: The cinema screen is not sentient and so requires a seer, whereas the screen of the Self includes the seer and the seen - rather, it is full of light.

The pictures of the cinema-show cannot be seen without the help of darkness, for you cannot have a show in broad daylight. Similarly, the mind thinks thoughts and sees objects owing to an underlying ignorance (*avidya*). The Self is pure knowledge, pure light where there is no duality. Duality implies ignorance. The Knowledge of the Self is beyond relative knowledge and ignorance, the Light of the Self is beyond the ordinary light and darkness. The Self is all alone.

Talk 637.

There was some question about progress.

Sri Bhagavan said that progress is for the mind and not for the Self. The Self is ever perfect.

2nd March, 1939

Talk 638.

For the last few days a rule is in force by which the visitors are not allowed to enter the hall between 12 noon and 2-30 p.m. A few Muslim visitors came to the Asramam in the interval today. The attendant promptly told them that they should not disturb Sri Bhagavan's rest at this hour. Sri Bhagavan quietly got down from the sofa and came out of the hall; He sat on the stone pavement adjoining the wall and asked the visitors also to sit close to Him. He went on reading a newspaper and also laid Himself on the stone. He was finally requested to go in.

Talk 639.

While speaking to Mr. K. L. Sarma of Pudukotah, Sri Bhagavan said: Leaving out what is intimate and immediate, why should one seek the rest? The scriptures say "That Thou art". In this statement 'Thou' is directly experienced; but leaving it out they go on seeking 'That'!

D.: In order to find the oneness of 'That' and of 'Thou'.

M.: 'Thou' is the Inner Self immanent in all; in order to find the same, he leaves himself out and sees the world objectively. What is the world? What is Immanent in it? It is 'That'. All such ideas arise only on forgetting one's own Self. I never bothered myself with such matters. Only after a time it occurred to me that men had investigated such matters.

3rd March, 1939

Talk 640.

At about 4 p.m. Sri Bhagavan, who was writing something intently, turned His eyes slowly towards the window to the north; He closed the fountain pen with the cap and put it in its case: He closed the notebook and put it aside; He removed the spectacles, folded them in the case and left them aside. He leaned back a little, looked up overhead, turned His face this way and that; and looked here and there. He passed His hand over His face and looked contemplative. Then He turned to someone in the hall and said softly:

M.: The pair of sparrows just came here and complained to me that their nest had been removed. I looked up and found their nest

missing." Then He called for the attendant, Madhava Swami, and asked: "Madhava, did anyone remove the sparrows' nest?

The attendant, who walked in leisurely, answered with an air of unconcern: "I removed the nests as often as they were built. I removed the last one this very afternoon."

M.: That's it. That is why the sparrows complained. The poor little ones! How they take the pieces of straw and shreds in their tiny beaks and struggle to build their nests!

Attendant: But, why should they build here, over our heads?

M.: Well - well. Let us see who succeeds in the end (After a short time Sri Bhagavan went out).

Talk 641.

Explaining the opening stanza of the *Sad Vidya*, Sri Bhagavan observed: The world is always apparent to everyone. All must know "I and this world exist". On enquiry "do these always exist?" and "if indeed real, they must remain even unrelated to time, space and differentiation; are they so?" It is evident that only in the waking and dream states these are perceived but not in deep sleep. Therefore 'I' and the world appear sometimes and disappear also. They are created, have their being and later vanish. Whence do they arise? Wherein do they remain? Where do they go on vanishing from view? Can such phenomena be admitted to be real?

Furthermore, I and the world, objects of creation, sustenance and destruction, are perceived in the waking and dream states only and not in deep sleep. How does deep sleep differ from the other two states? In sleep there are no thoughts whereas in the other two states there are. There the thoughts must be the origin of the 'I' and the world.

Now what about thoughts? They cannot be natural; otherwise they cannot appear at one moment and disappear at another. Wherefrom do they arise? Their source, ever-present and not subject to variations, must be admitted to be. It must be the eternal state as said in the *upadesa mantra* - That from which all beings come forth, that in which they remain and that into which they resolve.

This stanza is not in praise or adoration but only an expression of the Reality.

Talk 642.

Mr. K. L. Sarma asked:

Svasvarupanusandhanam bhaktirityabhidhiyate.

Again - *Svatmatattvanusadhanam bhaktirityapare joguh*.

What is the difference between the two?

M.: The former is *vichara* - Who am I? (*Koham?*) It represents *jnana*. The latter is *dhyana* - Whence am I? (*Kutoham?*) This admits a *jivatma* which seeks the *Paramatma*.

Talk 643.

An elderly, learned Andhra asked: "Are the two methods Karma *marga* and *jnana marga* separate and independent of each other? Or is the Karma *marga* only a preliminary which after successful practice should be followed by *jnana marga* for the consummation of the aim? The Karma advocates non-attachment to action and yet an active life, whereas the *jnana* means renunciation. What is the true meaning of renunciation? Subjugation of lust, passion, greed, etc., is common to all and forms the essential preliminary step for any course. Does not freedom from passions indicate renunciation? Or is renunciation different, meaning cessation of the active life? These questions are troubling me and I beg lights to be thrown on those doubts."

Bhagavan smiled and said: "You have said all. Your question contains the answer also. Freedom from passions is the essential requisite. When that is accomplished all else is accomplished."

D.: Sri Sankara emphasises the *jnana marga* and renunciation as preliminary to it. But there are clearly two methods *dwividha* mentioned in the Gita. They are Karma and *Jnana* (*Lokesmin dwividha nishtha*...).

M.: Sri Acharya has commented on the Gita and on that passage also.

D.: The Gita seems to emphasise Karma. For Arjuna is persuaded to fight; Sri Krishna Himself set the example by an active life of great exploits.

M.: The Gita starts saying that you are not the body, that you are not therefore the *karta*.

D.: What is the significance?

M.: That one should act without thinking that oneself is the actor. The actions go on despite his egolessness. The person has come into manifestation for a certain purpose. That purpose will be accomplished whether he considers himself the actor or not.

D.: What is Karma yoga? Is it non-attachment to Karma or its fruit?

M.: Karma yoga is that yoga in which the person does not arrogate to himself the function of being the actor. The actions go on automatically.

D.: Is it the non-attachment to the fruits of actions?

M.: The question arises only if there is the actor. It is being all along said that you should not consider yourself the actor.

D.: So Karma yoga is *kartrtva buddhi rahita karma* - action without the sense of doership.

M.: Yes. Quite so.

D.: The Gita teaches active life from beginning to end.

M.: Yes, the actor-less action.

D.: Is it then necessary to leave the home and lead a life of renunciation?

M.: Is the home in you? Or are you in the home?

D.: It is in my mind.

M.: Then what becomes of you when you leave the physical environment?

D.: Now I see. Renunciation is only action without the sense of being the *karta*.

Is there not action for a *jivanmukta*?

M.: Who raises the question? Is he a *jivanmukta* or another?

D.: Not a *jivanmukta*.

M.: Let the question be raised after *jivanmukti* is gained if it is found necessary. *Mukti* is admitted to be freedom from the mental activities also. Can a *mukta* think of action?

D.: Even if he gives up the action, the action will not leave him. Is it not so?

M.: With what is he identified in order that this question might apply?

D.: Yes, I see all right. My doubts are now cleared.

Talk 644.

A District Official, a Muslim: What is the necessity for reincarnation?

M.: Let us first see if there is incarnation before we speak of reincarnation.

D.: How?

M.: Are you now incarnated that you speak of reincarnation?

D.: Yes. Certainly. An amoeba developed into higher organisms until the human being has been evolved. This is now the perfection in development. Why should there be further reincarnation?

M.: Who is to set limits to this theory of evolution?

D.: Physically it is perfect. But for the soul, further development may be required which will happen after the death of the man.

M.: Who is the man? Is he the body or the soul?

D.: Both put together.

M.: Do you not exist in the absence of the body?

D.: How do you mean? It is impossible.

M.: What was your state in deep sleep?

D.: Sleep is temporary death. I was unconscious and therefore I cannot say what the state was.

M.: But you existed in sleep. Did you not?

D.: In sleep the soul leaves the body and goes out somewhere. Then it returns to the body before waking. It is therefore temporary death.

M.: A man who is dead never returns to say that he died, whereas the man who had slept says that he slept.

D.: Because this is temporary death.

M.: If death is temporary and life is temporary, what is it that is real?

D.: What is meant by the question?

M.: If life and death be temporary, there must be something which is not temporary. Reality is that which is not temporary.

D.: There is nothing real. Everything is temporary. Everything is *maya*.

M.: On what does *maya* appear?

D.: Now I see you; it is all *maya*.

M.: If everything is *maya*, how does any question arise?

D.: Why should there be reincarnation?

M.: For whom?

D.: For the perfect human being.

M.: If you are perfect, why do you fear to be reborn? It indicates imperfection.

D.: Not that I fear. But you say that I must be reborn.

M.: Who says it? You are asking the question.

D.: What I mean is this. You are a Perfect Being; I am a sinner. You tell me that I being a sinner must be reborn in order to perfect myself?

M.: No, I do not say so. On the other hand I say that you have no birth and therefore no death.

D.: Do you mean to say that I was not born?

M.: Yes, you are now thinking that you are the body and therefore confuse yourself with its birth and death. But you are not the body and you have no birth and death.

D.: Do you not uphold the theory of rebirth?

M.: No. On the other hand, I want to remove your confusion that you will be reborn. It is you who think that you will be reborn.

See for whom this question arises. Unless the questioner is found, the questions can never be set at rest.

D.: This is no answer to my question.

M.: On the other hand, this is the answer to elucidate the point and all other doubts as well.

D.: This will not satisfy all others.

M.: Leave others alone. If you take care of yourself others can take care of themselves.

Silence followed. He left in a few minutes apparently dissatisfied with the discourse.

Sri Bhagavan said after a few minutes: This will work in him. The discourse will have its effect.

He does not admit any Reality. Well - who is it that has determined everything to be unreal? Otherwise the determination also becomes unreal.

The theory of evolution is enlarged upon by the person in this state. Where is it, if not in his mind?

To say that the soul must be perfected after death, the soul must be admitted to exist. Therefore the body is not the person. It is the soul.

To explain evolution Sri Bhagavan continued:

One sees an edifice in his dream. It rises up all of a sudden. Then he begins to think how it should have been already built brick by brick by so many labourers during such a long time. Yet he does not see the builders working. So also with the theory of evolution. Because he finds himself a man he thinks that he has developed to that stage from the primal state of the amoeba.

Another devotee: It is an illustration of the saying that he sees the universe full of cause and effect *Visram pasyati karyakaranataya*.

M.: Yes. The man always traces an effect to a cause, there must be a cause for the cause, the argument becomes interminable. Relating the effect to a cause makes the man think. He is finally driven to consider who he is himself. When he knows the Self there is Perfect Peace. It is for that consummation that man is evolved.

Later in the evening, another devotee said to Sri Bhagavan that the Muslim official continued to speak of the same topic to the Municipal Commissioner.

Then Sri Bhagavan said: He says that body and soul together form the man. But I ask what is the state of the man in deep sleep. The body is not aware whereas the man is there all along.

D.: But he says that sleep is temporary death.

M.: Yes, so he says. But he qualifies the word death by the word temporary, so that the man returns to the body. How does he find the body to re-enter it? Moreover, he is sure to return. That means that he must exist to return to the body or to claim the body for himself.

The scriptures however say that the *prana* protects the body in sleep. For when the body lies on the floor, a wolf or a tiger may feed on it. The animal sniffs and feels that there is life within and therefore does not feed on it as on a corpse. That again shows that there is someone in the body to protect it in deep sleep.

General remarks by Sri Bhagavan:

All knowledge is meant only to lead the person to the realisation of the Self. The scriptures or religions are well-known to be for

that purpose. What do they all mean? Leave alone what they say of the past or of the future; for it is only speculative. But the present existence is within the experience of all. Realise the pure Being. There is an end to all discourses and disputes.

But the intellect of man does not easily take to this course. It is only rarely that a man becomes introverted. The intellect delights in investigating the past and the future but does not look to the present.

D.: Because it must lose itself if it sank within in search of the Self. But the other investigation gives it not only a lease of life but also food for growth.

M.: Yes. Quite so. Why is intellect developed? It has a purpose. The purpose is that it should show the way to realise the Self. It must be put to that use.

12th March, 1939

Talk 645.

A man of about 30, of good appearance came to the hall with a few companions. The man abruptly began: "To say 'I-I' cannot help anyone to reach the goal. How can 'I' be pointed out?"

M.: It must be found within. It is not an object so that it may be shown by one to another.

D.: When the instruction to find the 'I' is given, the instruction must be made complete by showing what it is.

M.: The instruction here amounts to direction only. It depends on the seeker to use the direction.

D.: The seeker is ignorant and seeks instruction.

M.: He is therefore guided to find the Truth.

D.: But it is not enough. The 'I' must be pointed out specifically.

The man assumed an aggressive attitude and did not listen. Sri Bhagavan tried to explain, but he would not allow Sri Bhagavan to do so.

Finally Sri Bhagavan said: This is not the attitude of the seeker. When someone teaches humility to the seeker, he will reach the way and not till then.

The chanting of the Vedas began.

The conversation was casually referred to by a devotee present.

Sri Bhagavan again said: The seeker must listen and try to understand. If on the other hand he wants to prove me, let him do so by all means. I do not argue.

The man again began: “My attitude was not properly understood. I want to know the ‘I’. It must be pointed out to me.”

But he displayed considerable malice. The others did not like it and so tried to bring him round. He became worse. Sri Bhagavan finally said: “Go back the way you came. Do it externally or internally, as it suits you.”

The man grew excited and others also were equally excited. He was finally led out of the hall and sent away.

Later it was learnt that the man was an adherent of yoga and that he used to abuse all other methods. He used to vilify *jnana* and the *jnanis*.

At night, after supper, Sri Bhagavan spoke of one Govinda Yogi, a Malayali Brahmin pandit of some repute, who used to extol yoga and vilify the other methods. He always cited the Gita, the Upanishads, etc., to support his statements. Others, *e.g.*, Sri Narayana Guru, used to refute him on the same grounds.

Later Sri Bhagavan spoke appreciating the amiability of Amritanatha. He is a great *tapasvi*, who had made considerable *japa*. He had fed the poor on many occasions in many places. He could easily gain the goodwill of others including great men like Sir P. Ramanathan and Pandit Malaviya.

13th March, 1939

Talk 646.

Sri Bhagavan referred to the following passage of Gandhiji in the *Harijan* of the 11th instant:

> “How mysterious are the ways of God! This journey to Rajkot is a wonder even to me. Why am I going, whither am I going? What for? I have thought nothing about these things. And if God guides me, what should I think, why should I think? Even thought may be an obstacle in the way of His guidance.
>
> “The fact is, it takes no effort to stop thinking. The thoughts do *not* come. Indeed there is no vacuum - but I mean to say that there is no thought about the mission.”

Sri Bhagavan remarked how true the words were and emphasised each statement in the extract. Then He cited Thayumanavar in support of the state which is free from thoughts:

> "Although I had often heard that all the *Srutis* declare the state of stillness to be one of Bliss, all Bliss - yet I continued to be ignorant. Again I did not follow the advice of my Lord - the Silent Master - because of my folly. I wandered in the forest of illusion: alas! it was my fate."
>
> "Bliss will reveal itself if one is still. Why then is this illusory yoga practice? Can it (*i.e.*, Bliss) be revealed by directing the intellect in a particular way? Do not say so, you who are given to the practice and are therefore an innocent babe."
>
> "The eternal Being is that state where you have disappeared. Are you not in it too? You, who cannot speak of it, do not be perplexed. Although you do not manifest, yet you are not lost. For you are eternal and also still. Do not be in pain. Here is Bliss - come on!"

15th March, 1939

Talk 647.

D.: Is not what Gandhiji describes, the state in which thoughts themselves become foreign?

M.: Yes, It is only after the rise of the 'I' thought that all other thoughts arise. The world is seen after you have felt "I am". The 'I-thought' and all other thoughts had vanished for him.

D.: Then the body-sense must be absent in that state.

M.: The body-sense also is a thought whereas he describes the state in which "thoughts do not come".

D.: He also says, "It takes no effort to stop thinking".

M.: Of course no effort is necessary to stop thoughts whereas one is necessary for bringing about thoughts.

D.: We are trying to stop thoughts. Gandhiji also says that thought is an obstacle to God's guidance. So it is the natural state. Though natural, yet how difficult to realise. They say that *sadhanas* are necessary and also that they are obstacles. We get confused.

M.: Sadhanas are needed so long as one has not realised it. They are for putting an end to obstacles. Finally there comes a stage when a person feels helpless notwithstanding the *sadhanas*. He is unable to pursue the much-cherished *sadhana* also. It is then that God's Power is realised. The Self reveals itself.

D.: If the state is natural, why does it not overcome the unnatural phases and assert itself over the rest?

M.: Is there anything besides that? Does anyone see anything besides the Self? One is always aware of the Self. So It is always Itself.

D.: It is said, because It shines forth, It is directly perceived. I understand from it that It becomes *pratyaksha* (directly perceived), because It is *pradeepta* (shining). Since it is not realised by us, I take it to be not shining. It is only *pradeepta* (shining), and hence admits of obstacles and goes under them. If the *atma* becomes *prakarshena deepta*, (very shining) it will shine over the rest. So it seems to be necessary to make it shine more.

M.: How can it be so? The Atma cannot be dull at one moment and blazing at another. It is unchanging and uniform.

D.: But Chudala says to Sikhidhvaja that she simply helped to trim the wick.

M.: That refers to *nididhyasana*.

By *sravana*, Knowledge dawns. That is the flame.

By *manana*, the Knowledge is not allowed to vanish. Just as the flame is protected by a wind-screen, so the other thoughts are not allowed to overwhelm the right knowledge.

By *nididhyasana*, the flame is kept up to burn bright by trimming the wick. Whenever other thoughts arise, the mind is turned inward to the light of true knowledge.

When this becomes natural, it is *samadhi*. The enquiry "Who am I?" is the *sravana*. The ascertainment of the true import of 'I' is the *manana*. The practical application on each occasion is *nididhyasana*. Being as 'I' is *samadhi*.

D.: Although we have heard it so often and so constantly yet we are unable to put the teaching into practise successfully. It must be due to weakness of mind. Is it possible that one's age is a bar?

M.: The mind is commonly said to be strong if it can think furiously. But here the mind is strong if it is free from thoughts. The yogis say that realisation can be had only before the age of thirty, but not the *jnanis*. For *jnana* does not cease to exist with age.

It is true that in the *Yoga Vasishta*, Vasishta says to Rama in the *Vairagya Prakarana* "You have this dispassion in your youth. It is admirable." But he did not say that *jnana* cannot be had in old age. There is nothing to prevent it in old age.

The *sadhak* must remain as the Self. If he cannot do so, he must ascertain the true meaning of the 'I' and constantly revert to it whenever other thoughts arise. That is the practice.

Some say that one must know the '*tat*' because the idea of the world constantly arises to deflect the mind. If the Reality behind it is first ascertained it will be found to be Brahman. The '*tvam*' is understood later. It is the *jiva*. Finally there will be *jivabrahmaikya* (union of the two).

But why all this? Can the world exist apart from the Self? The 'I' is always Brahman. Its identity need not be established by logic and practice. It is enough that one realises the Self. It is always the Brahman.

According to the other school, *nididhyasana* will be the thought *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman). That is diversion of thought to Brahman. No diversion should be allowed. Know the Self and there is an end of it.

No long process is necessary to know the Self. Is it to be pointed out by another? Does not everyone know that he exists? Even in utter darkness when he cannot see his hand, he answers a call and says "I am here".

D.: But that 'I' is the ego or the 'I-thought' and it is not the Absolute Self that answers the call or is otherwise aware of oneself.

M.: Even the ego can become aware of itself in the absence of light, sight, etc. Much more so should be the Pure Light of the Self.

I am saying that the Self is self-evident. One need not discuss the *tattvas* to find the Self. Some say there are twenty-four *tattvas*, others more and so on. Should we know the *tattvas*, before we admit the existence of the Self? The *sastras* dilate upon them in

order to point out that the Self is untouched by them. But for the seeker he can straightaway admit the Self and try to be That, without having recourse to the study of the *tattvas*.

D.: Gandhiji adhered to *satya* (Truth) so long and won realisation of the Self.

M.: What is *satya* except the Self? *Satya* is that which is made up of *sat*. Again *sat* is nothing but the Self. So Gandhiji's *satya* is only the Self.

Each one knows the Self but is yet ignorant. The person is enabled to realise only after hearing the *mahavakya*. Hence the Upanishadic text is the eternal Truth to which everyone who has realised owes his experience. After hearing the Self to be the Brahman the person finds the true import of the Self and reverts to it whenever he is diverted from it. Here is the whole process of Realisation.

17th March, 1939

Talk 648.

Sri Bhagavan said that Tatva Rayar was the first to pour forth Advaita philosophy in Tamil.

He had said that the Earth was his bed, his hands were his plates for taking food, the loin cloth was his clothing and thus there was no want for him.

In *Maharaja Turavu* (the renunciation of the king) he says: He was seated on the bare ground, the earth was his seat, the mind was the *chamara*; the sky was the canopy; and renunciation was his spouse:

Then Sri Bhagavan continued: I had no cloth spread on the floor in earlier days. I used to sit on the floor and lie on the ground. That is freedom. The sofa is a bondage. It is a gaol for me. I am not allowed to sit where and how I please. Is it not bondage?

One must be free to do as one pleases, and should not be served by others.

'No want' is the greatest bliss. It can be realised only by experience. Even an emperor is no match for a man with no want. The emperor has got vassals under him. But the other man is not aware of anyone beside the Self. Which is better?

18th March, 1939

Talk 649.

Mr. Thompson, a very quiet young gentleman who is staying in India for some years and studying Hindu Philosophy as an earnest student, asked:

Srimad Bhagavad Gita says: "I am the prop for Brahman." In another place, it says: "I am in the heart of each one." Thus the different aspects of the Ultimate Principle are revealed. I take it that there are three aspects, namely (1) the transcendental (2) the immanent and (3) the cosmic. Is Realisation to be in any one of these or in all of them? Coming to the transcendental from the cosmic, the Vedanta discards the names and forms as being *maya*. But I cannot readily appreciate it because a tree means the trunk, branches, leaves, etc. I cannot dismiss the leaves as *maya*. Again the Vedanta also says that the whole is Brahman as illustrated by gold and ornaments of gold. How are we to understand the Truth?

M.: The *Gita* says: *Brahmano hi pratishtaham*. If that '*aham*' is known, the whole is known.

D.: It is the immanent aspect only.

M.: You now think that you are an individual, there is the universe and that God is beyond the cosmos. So there is the idea of separateness. This idea must go. For God is not separate from you or the cosmos. The *Gita* also says:

The Self am I, O Lord of Sleep,
In every creature's heart enshrined.
The rise and noon of every form,
I am its final doom as well. *B. G., X. 20.*

Thus God is not only in the heart of all, He is the prop of all, He is the source of all, their abiding place and their end. All proceed from Him, have their stay in Him, and finally resolve into Him. Therefore He is not separate.

D.: How are we to understand this passage in the *Gita*:

"This whole cosmos forms a particle of Me."

M.: It does not mean that a small particle of God separates from Him and forms the Universe. His *Sakti* is acting; as a result of one phase of

such activity the cosmos has become manifest. Similarly, the statement in *Purusha Sukta*, “All the beings form His one foot (*Padosya viswa bhutani*) does not mean that Brahman is in four parts.

D.: I understand it. Brahman is certainly not divisible.

M.: So the fact is that Brahman is all and remains indivisible. He is ever realised. The man does not however know it. He must know it. Knowledge means the overcoming of obstacles which obstruct the revelation of the Eternal Truth that the Self is the same as Brahman. The obstacles form altogether your idea of separateness as an individual. Therefore the present attempt will result in the truth being revealed that the Self is not separate from Brahman.

22nd March, 1939

Talk 650.

An Andhra gentleman of middle age asked Sri Bhagavan how he should make his *japa*.

M.: The *japa* contains the word *namah*. It means that state in which the mind does not manifest apart from the Self. When the state is accomplished there will be an end of the *japa*. For the doer disappears and so also the action. The Eternal Being is alone left. *Japa* should be made until that state is reached. There is no escape from the Self. The doer will be automatically drawn into it. When once it is done the man cannot do anything else but remain merged in the Self.

D.: Will *bhakti* lead to *mukti*?

M.: Bhakti is not different from *mukti*. *Bhakti* is being as the Self (*Swarupa*). One is always that. He realises it by the means he adopts. What is *bhakti*? To think of God. That means: only one thought prevails to the exclusion of all other thoughts. That thought is of God which is the Self or it is the Self surrendered unto God. When He has taken you up nothing will assail you. The absence of thoughts is *bhakti*. It is also *mukti*.

The *jnana* method is said to be *vichara* (enquiry). That is nothing but ‘supreme devotion’ (*parabhakti*). The difference is in words only.

You think that *bhakti* is meditation on the Supreme Being. So long as there is *vibhakti* (the sense of separateness), *bhakti* (reunion) is

sought. The process will lead to the ultimate goal as is said in *Srimad Bhagavad Gita:*

arto jignasuh artharthi jnani cha Bharatarshabha
tesham jnani nityayukta ekabhaktir visishyate

— Ch. VII (l6, 17).

Any kind of meditation is good. But if the sense of separateness is lost and the object of meditation or the subject who meditates is alone left behind without anything else to know, it is *jnana. Jnana* is said to be *ekabhakti* (single-minded devotion). The *jnani* is the finality because he has become the Self and there is nothing more to do. He is also perfect and so fearless, *dwitiyat vai bhayam bhavati* - only the existence of a second gives rise to fear. This is *mukti.* It is also *bhakti*.

23rd March, 1939

Talk 651.

A. W. Chadwick is copying the English translation of the Tamil *Kaivalya Navaneeta*. When he came across some technical terms in it and felt some difficulty in understanding them, he asked Sri Bhagavan about them. Sri Bhagavan said: "Those portions deal with theories of creation. They are not material because the *Srutis* do not mean to set forth such theories. They mention the theories casually so that the enquirer may please himself if he be so inclined. The truth is that the world appears as a passing shadow in a flood of light. Light is necessary to see that shadow also. The shadow does not deserve any special notice, analysis or discussion. The book deals with the Self and that is its purpose. The discussions on creation may be omitted for the present."

Later, Sri Bhagavan continued: "The Vedanta says that the cosmos springs into view simultaneously with the seer. There is no detailed process of creation. This is said to be *yugapat srshti* (instantaneous creation). It is quite similar to the creations in dream where the experiencer springs up simultaneously with the objects of experience. When this is told, some people are not satisfied for they are so rooted in objective knowledge. They seek to find out how there can be sudden creation. They argue that an effect must be preceded by a cause. In short, they desire an explanation for the existence of the world which

they see around them. Then the *Srutis* try to satisfy their curiosity by such theories of creation. This method of dealing with the subject of creation is called *krama srshti* (gradual creation). But the true seeker can be content with *yugapat srshti* - instantaneous creation."

24th March, 1939

Talk 652.

A certain person had composed verses in praise of Sri Bhagavan. Therein the word *Avartapuri* occurs. Sri Bhagavan said that it means Tiruchuzhi, the birth place of Sri Bhagavan. The place goes by different names. *Avarta chuzhi* an eddy. There had been several deluges. God Siva had saved this place from three of them. On one occasion when the whole land surface was immersed in the waters, Siva planted His spear in that place. All the waters, which would have otherwise flooded it, were drawn into that hole. Then an eddy was formed. Hence the name. Again in another deluge, He held the place aloft on the top of the spear. Hence, *Soolapuri*.

Mother Earth was carried away by Hiranyaksha into the waters. When recovered by Vishnu she felt that she had *papasparsa* by that Rakshasa. As an expiation of that impure touch she worshipped Siva in that place. Hence, *Bhuminathesvara Kshetra*.

Gautama is prominent in Arunachala as well as in Tiruchuzhi. Shiva showed Himself to the saint in the dancing posture and also re-enacted the wedding of Gauri Sankar.

Kaundinya was another *rishi* for whose sake the sacred river began to flow there. It goes by the name of the *rishi i.e.*, Kaundinya river which in Tamil was corrupted into Kundaru. It is otherwise called Papahari *i.e.*, the destroyer of sins. There lies a story behind it: A King's daughter was hysterical (*i.e.*, possessed). She was taken on a pilgrimage to various sacred places and *tirthas*. On one occasion the party heard the name of Papahari as a *tirtha* in a *sankalpa* before bathing. They enquired where the *tirtha* was and went to Tiruchuzhi. The girl was bathed in that water and thus made free from the spirit.

The Pandya king also got free from *brahmahatya* in this place. It happens to be the centre of the Pandya Kingdom, which comprised the Madura, Ramnad and Tirunelveli Districts.

The village had a sacred tank in front of the temple, which was the spot of the eddy created by the spear of Siva. Even now the waters in the tank rise at the rate of about a foot every day for ten consecutive days preceding the full moon in the Tamil month Masi (*Maghasuddha Pournami*) and then gradually fall during the succeeding ten days. This phenomenon can be observed every year. It is noted with wonder by the young ones of the village. Pilgrims gather to bathe in those waters on that occasion. That water is sulphurous for the silver jewels of the bathers become dark after bathing in it. Sri Bhagavan said he had noted it when He was a boy.

The village has the river on one side and a huge lake on the other side. The bund of the lake is clayey and runs about three miles in all. The lake is strangely enough twenty feet over the level of the village. Even when it is over-full, the waters escape in other directions leaving the village unaffected.

1st April, 1939

Talk 653.

Some teachers who attended the Teachers' Guild meeting in the town came on a visit to the hall. One of them asked Sri Bhagavan: "I seem to be wandering in a forest because I do not find the way."

M.: This idea of being in a forest must go. It is such ideas which are at the root of the trouble.

D.: But I do not find the way.

M.: Where is the forest and where is the way unless they are in you? You are as you are and yet you speak of a forest and ways.

D.: But I am obliged to move in society.

M.: Society is also an idea similar to that of the forest.

D.: I leave my home and go and mix in society.

M.: Who does it?

D.: The body moves and does all.

M.: Quite so. Now that you identify yourself with the body you feel the trouble. The trouble is in your mind. You think that you are the body or that you are the mind. But there are occasions when you

are free from both. For example in deep slumber, you create a body and a world in your dream. That represents your mental activities. In your waking state you think that you are the body and then the idea of forest and the rest arise.

Now, consider the situation. You are an unchanging and continuous being who remains in all these states which are constantly changing and therefore transient. But you are always there. It follows that these fleeting objects are mere phenomena which appear on your being like pictures which move across a screen. The screen does not move when the picture moves. Similarly, you do not move from where you are even when the body leaves the home and mixes in society.

Your body, the society, the forest and the ways are all in you; you are not in them. You are the body also but not this body only. If you remain as your pure Self, the body and its movements need not affect you.

D.: This can be realised only by the Grace of the master. I was reading *Sri Bhagavata*; it says that Bliss can be had only by the dust of the Master's feet. I pray for Grace.

M.: What is Bliss but your own being? You are not apart from Being which is the same as Bliss. You are now thinking that you are the mind or the body which are both changing and transient. But you are unchanging and eternal. That is what you should know.

D.: It is darkness and I am ignorant.

M.: This ignorance must go. Again, who says 'I am ignorant'? He must be the witness of ignorance. That is what you are. Socrates said, "I know that I do not know." Can it be ignorance? It is wisdom.

D.: Why then do I feel unhappy when I am in Vellore and feel peace in Your Presence?

M.: Can this feeling in this place be Bliss? When you leave the place you say you are unhappy. Therefore this peace is not permanent, nay it is mixed with unhappiness which is felt in another place. Therefore you cannot find Bliss in places and in periods of time. It must be permanent in order that it may be useful. Such permanent being is yourself. Be the Self and that is Bliss. You are always That.

You say that you left Vellore, travelled in the train, arrived in Tiruvannamalai, entered the hall and found happiness. When you

go back you are not happy in Vellore. Now, do you really move from place to place? Even considering you to be the body, the body sits in a cart at the gate of the home, the cart moves on to the railway station. Then it gets into a railway carriage which speeds on from Vellore to Tiruvannamalai. There it gets into another cart which brings the body here. Yet when you are asked, you say that you travelled all the way from Vellore. Your body remains where it was and all the places went past it.

Such ideas are due to the false identity which is so deep-rooted.

Another asked: Should we understand the world as transient (*anitya*)?

M.: Why so? Because you are now considering it to be permanent (*nitya*) the Scriptures tell you that it is not so in order to wean you from wrong ideas. This should be done by knowing yourself to be eternal (*nitya*) and not by branding the world as transitory (*anitya*).

D.: We are told to practise indifference (*udasina*) which is possible only if the world is unreal.

M.: Yes. *Oudasinyam abhipsitam.* Indifference is advised. But what is it? It is absence of love and hatred. When you realise the Self on which these phenomena pass, will you love or hate them? That is the meaning of indifference.

D.: That will lead to want of interest in our work. Should we do our duty or not?

M.: Yes - certainly. Even if you try not to do your duty you will be perforce obliged to do it. Let the body complete the task for which it came into being.

Sri Krishna also says in the Gita, whether Arjuna liked it or not he would be forced to fight. When there is work to be done by you, you cannot keep away; nor can you continue to do a thing when you are not required to do it, that is to say, when the work allotted to you has been done. In short, the work will go on and you must take your share in it - the share which is allotted to you.

D.: How is it to be done?

M.: Like an actor playing his part in a drama - free from love or hatred.

OM TAT SAT

Glossary

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Bibliography

GLOSSARY

A

abhasa: reflection
abhichara prayogam: Black magic
abhijna: direct perception
abhimana: attachment
abhisheka: pouring water, etc. over any sacred image
abhyasa: practice
abhyasi: one who practises
achala: unmoving; a hill or a mountain
achamana: sipping water before or after a religious ceremony
achit: not sentient
adhara: support
adhishtana: substratum
adhyaropa: superimposition
adhyasika: superimposed
adyatmika sakti: power of the Self
adhridha: weak, not firm
advaita: non-duality
agami (*agami karma*): actions expected to bear fruit in future births
aham: I
aham Brahmasmi: I am Brahman
ahankara: ‘I’ sense; the ego-self
ahimsa: non-violence
ajatavada: the theory of *advaita* which denies creation
ajnana: ignorance
ajna: direction; injunction
ajnani: the ignorant, one who has not realized the Self
akara: form or shape
akasa: ether; space
akasavani: voice coming from the sky
akhanda: undivided
akhandakara vritti: unbroken experience
akritopasaka: one who has not done *upasana* or meditation
amrita: immortal
amrita nadi: the name of a yogic nerve
anadi: without beginning
anahata: name of a yogic *chakra*
ananda: bliss
anandamaya kosa: the sheath of bliss
anandatman: Self in the state of bliss
ananta: infinite; endless
anatman: non-Self

anava: limitation
anichcha: involuntary
anitya: transitory
annamaya kosa: sheath of gross matter
antah (*antar*): internal
antah karanam: the inner organ; the mind
antah pranayama: internal breath-regulation
antardhana: disappearance from sight
antarmukhi manas: inward-turned mind
anu: atom
ap: water
apana: the life-force which goes down
apara: the lower
apara vibhuti: inferior *vibhuti*
aparoksha: direct; immediate
apavada: removal
ardra: a star in the constellation of Orion
aruna: red
arupa: formless
asamsakti: non-attachment; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
asana: sitting posture; seat
asat: not real
asesha sakshi: witness of all
asrama: stage of life; a place where hermits and sages live
asthira: unsteady
asukavi: one who can versify spontaneously
asuddha: impure
asura: demon
atiasrama (*atyasrama*): Above the four stages of life
ati jagrat: beyond waking
ati sunya: beyond the void
atita: beyond
ativahika sarira: the subtle body which remains when the physical body perishes and which carries the individual to other worlds
atma (*n*): Self
atma jnani: one who has realized the Self
atma nadi: the name of a yogic nerve
atma nishta: abiding in the Self
atmanusandhana: thinking constantly of the Self
atma vichara: enquiry into the Self
atyanta vairagyam: total dispassion
avarana: covering
avarta: eddy

avastha traya: the three states of consciousness, namely waking, dream and sleep
avatar: incarnation of God
avidya: nescience; ignorance
avritta chakshus: introverted look
ayatana: repository

B

bahir pranayamam: external breath regulation
bahir mukhi manas: outward going mind
bahudaka: a *sannyasin* who wanders about
bahya: external
bala: child
bandha: bondage
bandha hetu: cause of bondage
beeja: seed
bhajana: singing God's praises especially in chorus
bhakta: devotee
bhakti: devotion
bhakti marga: path of devotion
bhashyakara: commentator
bhavana: idea
bhoga: enjoyment
bhoga hetu: cause of enjoyment
bhogyam: that which is enjoyed
bhoga vastu: object of enjoyment
bhokta: enjoyer
bhuma: all-comprehensive; the Absolute
bindu: a term used in *Tantrism*
brahmachari: a celibate; a student
brahmahatya: the sin of killing a *brahmin*
Brahmaivaham: Brahman am l
Brahmajnana: knowledge (realization) of Brahman
Brahmajnani: one who has realized the Self
Brahman: The Supreme Being; the Absolute
Brahmanishta: one who is established in Brahman
brahmacharya: celibacy
brahmakaravritti: concept in the form of Brahman
Brahmavid: one who has realised Brahman
Brahma-vid-vara: one who is a superior among knowers of Brahman
Brahma-vid-varishta: the very best among the knowers of Brahman
Brahma-vid-varya: the best among the Knowers of Brahman
Buddha: one who is aware
buddhi: intellect

C

chaitanya: Consciousness
chakshus: eye
chamara: a fly whisk made of the bushy tail of *Bos grunniens* used as a badge of royalty
chanchala: changing, fickle
chidvyoman (*chitta vyoman*): expanse of consciousness
chinmaya: full of Consciousness
chinta: thought or idea
chintamani: wish-fulfilling gem
chit: Consciousness
chitta: memory; mind
chitta-nirodha: control of mind
chitta suddhi: purity of mind
chitta vilasa: play of mind
chittaikograta: one-pointedness of mind

D

daharakasa: ether of the heart
dana: gift
darsan(*a*): seeing; vision
dasi: courtesan
deha(*m*): body
dehatma buddhi: I-am-the-body consciousness
dehavasana: attachment to the body
devas: celestial beings
dharana: concentration of mind; one of the eight stages of *Raja Yoga*
dharma sastri: one who is well-versed in the scriptures relating to *dharma*
dhriti: steadfastness
dhyana: meditation; contemplation
dikpalas: gods who protect the various quarters
diksha: spiritual instruction
divya chakshus: divine eye
drashta: seer
dridha: firm
drik: he who sees; the subject
drishti: look
drishti srishti: simultaneous creation
drisya: that which is seen; the object
drisyanuviddha: associated with something seen
drisya vilaya: the disappearance of the objective world
dukha: misery; frustration
dvaita: duality
dvandva: pair of opposites
dvividha (*dwividha*): two-fold

E

eka: one
ekagrata: concentration

G

ganja: a narcotic, *hashish*
Gayatri: a well-known Vedic *mantra*
gopuram: temple tower
granthi: knot
grihastha: householder
grihini: housewife
gunas: the three fundamental qualities, tendencies or stresses which underlie all manifestations
gunatita: one who has transcended the *gunas*
guru: a spiritual master; teacher

H

halahala: the poison which came up when the milky ocean was churned
hamsa: a *sannyasi* who has advanced to a high stage
hasta: hand
hatha yoga: a form of yoga involving bodily postures
hetu: cause
Hiranyagarbha: universal consciousness; totality of minds
homa: sacrifice in fire
hridaya: heart; the spiritual centre in the body
hridaya granthi: knot of the heart
hrit: heart
hrit pundarika: the heart lotus

I

ichcha: desire
idam: this
indriyas: senses
ishta devata: the god whom one likes to worship or contemplate
Isvara: God, the Supreme Being in His aspect as the Lord of all creation
Isvara anugraha: God's grace
Isvara aradhana: worship of God
Isvara drishti: Seeing everything as God
lsvara prasada: God's grace

J

jada: inert
jagat: world
jagrat: waking state

jagrat sushupti: wakeful sleep
jai: victory
jala: water
janma: birth
japa: repetition of a sacred word or syllable or a name of God
japa karta: one who does *japa*
jirna: decayed
jiva: the individual soul; the ego
jivanmukta: one who is liberated even when he is alive
jivanmukti: liberation while one is alive
jivatman: the individual self
jnana(*m*): knowledge
jnana bhumikas: stages of knowledge of which there are seven
jnana chakshus: eye of wisdom
jnana drishti: eye of wisdom
jnanagni: fire of wisdom
jnana lakshana: sign of wisdom
jnana marga: the path of knowledge
jnana yoga: the method of realizing the Absolute through knowledge
jnanendriya: organ of knowledge
jnani: the Self-realized sage
jothi (*jyothi*): light; effulgence

K

kaivalya: the state of liberation
kala: a term used in Tantrism
kalpana: idea
kama: desire; lust
kantha: throat
kanthabharana: ornament worn round the neck
kanya: virgin
karana: cause
karana sarira: causal body
karma: action; work; deeds; also result of action
karma samya: good and bad actions in equal proportions
karma traya: the three kinds of karma, namely *sanchita*, *agami* and *prarabdha*
karma yoga: the spiritual path of action
karmendriya: organ of action
karpura arati: the waving of lighted camphor during *puja*
karta: he who does an act
kartrtva: doership
kartrtva buddhi: the sense of doership
kashaya: latent impurity

kashaya: ochre coloured garment
kasiyatra: pilgrimage to Kasi; part of the marriage rites among Brahmins
kasturi: musk
kayakalpa: a medicinal preparation for prolonging life
kayasiddhi: making the body proof against injury
kevala kumbhaka: sudden stoppage of breathing, whether in the midst of inhaling or exhaling
kevala samadhi: *samadhi* in which activities of body and mind are only merged
khanda: division
Krama mukti: liberation by degrees
krama srishti: gradual creation
kshetra: temple; field; the body
kshipta: active
khyati: theory
kousalam: skill
krida: play, pastime
kritopasaka: one who has done *upasana* or meditation
krodha: anger
kumbha: a pot used for keeping water
kumbhaka: retention of breath
kundalini: yogic power called the serpent power
Kumkuma: vermilion powder applied to the forehead
kutichaka: a *sannyasin* who lives permanently in a hut
kuvasana: bad tendency

L

laghu: light; easy
lakshana: sign
lakshya: aim, target, goal
lakshyartha: implied meaning
laya: dissolution
lila (*leela*): play or sport
linga: symbol
Linga sarira: subtle body
loka: world; that which is seen
loukika: worldly

M

madhya: centre; mixed; middling
madhyama: a stage in uttering sounds
maharshi: great *rishi* (seer or sage)
mahasunya: great void
mahatma: enlightened person
mahavakyas: the four main sentences proclaiming the truth of Brahman, one taken from each Veda

malaparipaka: complete removal of impurity
malina: impure
manana: thinking over what has been heard
mani: jewel
manolaya: (temporary) subsidence of the mind
manomaya kosa: sheath of mind
manonasa: extinction of the mind
manta: thinker
mantra: cosmic sound forms of the Vedas used for worship and prayer; also seed letters for meditation on the form of the Lord; ritual incantation
mantra japa: repetition of a *mantra*
marga: path
maru marichika: mirage seen in a desert
mati: thinking power
maya: illusion; the power inherent in Brahman by which it manifests the world
maya vada: the doctrine of *maya*
medha: intellect
Moda: joy which is higher than priya
moksha: Liberation; spiritual freedom
moodha: dull
moola: root; source
mooladhara: One of the yogic centres of the body
mouna (*mowna*): Silence
mriga trishna: water of mirage
mukta: one who is liberated
mukti: Liberation; spiritual freedom
Mulavidya: primal ignorance
mumukshu: one who aspires for Liberation
mumukshutva: the desire for Liberation
muni: sage
muppazh: three voids

N

na medhaya: not by the intellect
nada: subtle sound accompanied by an effulgence, a term used in Tantrism
nabhi: navel
nadaswaram: the pipe of the South Indian piper
nadi: yogic nerve
naham: I am not
naishtika brahmacharya: lifelong celibacy
nama: name; the name of God
nama japa: repetition of the name of God
nama sankirtan: Singing the names of God
nama smarana: remembering and repeating the name of God

namaskar (*a*): prostration before God or Guru
nana: diversity
naraka: hell
nasa: destruction
nava: new
nididhyasana: the last of the three stages of vedantic realization; uninterrupted contemplation
nijananda: true bliss
nirakara upasana: meditation on the formless
nirguna: without attributes
nirguna upasana: meditation on the attributeless Brahman
nirodha: control
nirvana: Liberation
nirvikalpa samadhi: the highest state of concentration in which the soul loses all sense of being different from the universal Self, but a temporary state from which there is a return to ego-consciousness
nishkama karma: acts done without a motive
nitya: always; eternal
nitya siddha: ever present
nivritti: destruction
nivritti marga: The path of renunciation
niyama: law, rule

O

owpacharika: in a worldly sense

P

padarthabhavini: absolute non-perception of objects; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
panchakshari: a *mantra* of five syllables sacred to Siva
panchikarana: division of the five elements and combining the parts in particular proportions
para: higher; in Tantrism unmanifest sound
param: transcendental
paramahamsa: a *sannyasin* who has attained Self-realization
paramarthika: absolute
paramarthika satyam: absolute reality
paramatma (*n*): the Supreme Self
paranchi khani: outgoing
para nadi: the name of a yogic nerve
para vibhuti: superior *vibhuti*
pareccha: by another's will
parinama vada: the theory of Brahman changing into the world
paroksha: hearsay or indirect

Pasyanti: a stage in uttering sound
phala: fruit; the result of an act
phala chaitanyam: knowledge
phala data: dispenser of the results of our acts
phala sruti: description of the result of an act
Pisachas: demons
poorna: full
pradakshina: going round a sacred person or place
pradeepta: Shining brightly
prajna: the individual being in sleep
prajnana: full consciousness
prajnana ghana: full consciousness
prakriti: nature, *Maya*
pralaya: dissolution (of the world)
pramana: means of valid knowledge
pramata (*r*): knower; cogniser
pramoda: joy which is higher than *moda*
prana: vital air; life-force; breath; the air which goes up
pranamaya kosa: sheath of *prana* or the vital air
pranasakti: the power of the vital forces
pranava: another term for OM
pranayama: regulation of breathing
prapatti: surrender
prapti: attainment
prarabdha: that part of one's karma which is to be worked out in this life
prasad (*a*): grace; food etc., which has been offered to God and afterwards distributed among the devotees
prasthana traya: the threefold scripture
pratibhasika satya: illusory reality as it appears to a particular individual
pratikam: symbol
pratikriya: remedy
pratyabhijna: recognition
pratyahara: one of the steps in Raja Yoga; withdrawal
pratyaksha: direct; immediate
pravritti marga: path of action
prayaschitta: a rite for expiating sin
prayatna: effort
prema: love
prithvi (*prthvi*): earth
priya: joy; dear
puja: ceremonial worship with flowers, water etc.
punya: merit
puraka: inhalation
purana: old; an ancient book of stories embodying religious symbolism

puri: city
puriashtaka: subtle body consisting of eight phases
purna: full
purusha: man; applied sometimes to God
purushakara: personal effort
purva paksha: arguments advanced by the opponent
purva samskara: latent tendency

R

Raja Yoga: the principal system of Yoga as taught by Patanjali
rajas: one of the three primal qualities, described as red, the principle of activity
rajju-sarpa: rope-snake; a rope looking like a snake in a dim light
rasa: bliss
rasasvada: taste of bliss in the absence of thoughts
ravi marga: path of the sun
rechaka: exhalation
rishi (*rshi*): a seer; a sage

S

sabdanuviddha: associated with sound
sad guru: true guru
sadhak (*a*): a spiritual aspirant; one who follows a method of spiritual discipline
sadhana: method of spiritual practice
sadhana-chatushtaya: the four qualifications expected in an aspirant
sadhu: ascetic; sage
sadhu seva: service rendered to sages
sadyomukti: immediate Liberation
saguna: with attributes
saguna upasana: meditation on Brahman with attributes
sahaja: natural; one's natural state
sahaja samadhi: *samadhi* which comes naturally and is present always
sahasrara: the highest yogic centre located in the brain
sajatiya: of the same kind
sakshatkaram: direct realization
sakshi: witness; the Self
sakti: power
sakti pata: descent of divine power on a person
sama: equal; common
samanya: common; general; ordinary
samashti: whole
samatva: equality
samjnana: awareness; perception

samrajya: empire
samsara: the cycle of births and deaths
samskara: innate tendency
samvit: consciousness; knowledge
samyamana: one-pointedness of mind
sanchita (*sanchita karma*): accumulated karma of former births
sandeha: doubt
sanga: association
sankalpa: intention, thought; the ostensible motive of doing a ritual uttered before it is begun
sannidhi: presence
sannyasi: an ascetic, one who belongs to the fourth stage of life
santi: peace
sarira: body
sariri: dweller in the body
sarira traya: the three bodies namely the physical, subtle and causal
sarva: all
sarvajna: omniscient
sarvajnatvam: omniscience
sastra: scripture; science
sat: good; existence
satya: true; the real
satyam: truth; reality
sat-chit-ananda: being consciousness-bliss
sat sanga: association with the wise
sattva: purity; one of the three primal qualities described as white, the principle of purity and goodness
sattvapatti: realization; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
sattvik: pure; relating to *sattva*, one of the three constituents of *prakriti*
savikalpa samadhi: a state of concentration in which the distinction between the knower. knowledge and known is not yet lost
shadadhara: the six yogic centres
siddha: one who has acquired supernatural powers and is capable of working miracles; also a state of accomplishment
siddhi: supernatural powers; realization; attainment
sishya: disciple
Sivoham: I am Siva
sloka: a stanza in Sanskrit
smriti: memory; scriptures based on the Vedas
soham: I am He (Brahman)
sparsa: touch
sphurana: manifestation
sraddha: faith
sravana: hearing of the truth from the guru

srishti drishti: gradual creation
srota: hearer
srotra: ear
sruti: scripture
sthitaprajna: one who is established in wisdom
sthula: physical
sthula sarira: physical body
sthiti: being
stotram: a hymn of praise
subhechcha: desire for enlightenment; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
suddha: pure
sukha: happiness
sukha asana: easy and comfortable posture of sitting
sukshma: subtle
sukshma sarira: the subtle body
sunya: blank; void
sushumna: the name of a yogic nerve
sushupti: dreamless sleep
sutra: string; aphorism
suvasana: good tendency
svagata: within itself
svapna: dream
svarga: heaven
svaroopa (*swarupa*): nature; real form
swaraj: independence
swatantra: independence
swechcha: of one's own will

T

taijasa: the individual being in dream
tamas: darkness; ignorance; one of the three primal qualities described as black; the principle of inertia
tanha: thirst (for living)
tanmatras: elements in their subtle forms
tanmaya: full of the Self
tanumanasa: tenuous mind; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
tapas (*tapasya*): austerity
tapobhrashta: one who has fallen away from his austerities
tapta-aya-pindavat: like a red hot iron ball
tattva: truth, essence of a thing
tejas: effulgence
tejomaya: full of light
tejo rupa: of the form of light

tirtha: a sacred river or tank
triputi: triad like seer, seen and seeing
turavu (Tamil): renunciation
turya (*turiya*): the fourth state beyond waking, dreaming and sleeping
turyaga: beyond words; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
tyaga: giving up

U

udasinam: indifference
upadesa: spiritual instruction
upadhi: limiting adjunct
upasaka: one who meditates
upasana: meditation
upasana sthana: seat of meditation

V

vachyartha: literal meaning
vada: theory; disputation
vaikhari: one of the stages in the formation of sound; audible sound
Vaikuntha: the abode of Vishnu
vairagya: dispassion; non-attachment
Vaishnavite: a worshipper of Vishnu
varnasrama dharma: *dharma* of the various castes and stages of life
vasana: habit of the mind; latent tendency or impression
vasana kshaya: cessation of *vasanas*
vastutah: in reality
vayu: air
vibhakti: separation
vibhuti: sacred ashes; God's glory; supernatural power
vichara: enquiry
vichara marga: the spiritual path of enquiry
vicharana: investigation; one of the seven stages of enlightenment
videha mukta: one who is liberated after death
videha mukti: liberation after death
vidya: knowledge; learning
vijatiya: of a different kind
vijnana: special knowledge; spiritual knowledge
vijnanamaya kosa: sheath of intellect
vijnanatma: the ignorant Self
vijnata: knower
vikshepa: diversity
vikshipta: distracted
viparita: contrary
Virat: totality of gross beings

visesha: particular; special
vishaya: object
visishta: qualified
visishtadvaitin: one who believes in a modified form of non-duality
visranti: repose
Visva: the individual being in the waking state
visvarupa (*darsana*): God seen as the universe
vivechana: discrimination
viyoga: separation
vritti: modification of the mind
vyaptam: pervaded
vyashti: part
vyavahara (*vyavaharika*): empirical
vyavahara satya: phenomenal existence

Y

yaga: ritualistic sacrifice
yajna: sacrifice
yoga: union (with the Supreme Being)
yogabhrashta: one who has slipped from the yoga
yogarudha: one who has attained yoga
Yogiraja: king of yogis
yugapat srishti: simultaneous creation

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Self-Realization by B.V. Narasimhaswami: The earliest major biography of Sri Bhagavan, first published in 1931, and now containing an epilogue by S.S. Cohen.

Sri Maharshi - A Short Life-Sketch by M.S. Kamath: A profusely illustrated biography written in a simple style.

The Last Days and Maha Nirvana of Bhagavan Sri Ramana: A small booklet that paints a moving picture of the final days of the Maharshi. Also contains photographs taken during the period.

REMINISCENCES ABOUT SRI BHAGAVAN

A Sadhu's Reminiscences of Ramana Maharshi by Sadhu Arunachala (A.W.Chadwick): Reminiscences of an unassuming English devotee, who came to Sri Bhagavan in 1935 and who remained in Tiruvannamalai almost permanently till his passing away in 1962. Contains moving passages that transport the reader directly into the presence of Sri Bhagavan.

At the Feet of Bhagavan by T. K. Sundaresa Aiyer: Leaves from the diary of a humble devotee who lived most of his life with Sri Bhagavan.

Crumbs from His Table by Ramanananda Swarnagiri (K. S. Narayanaswami Aiyer): Reminiscences of a devotee who visited Sri Bhagavan several times during the years 1934 to 1936, and who noted down instructive conversations and illustrative stories told by Sri Bhagavan.

Glimpses of the Life and Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi by Frank Humphreys: An account of several meetings with Sri Bhagavan in the year 1911, and of the teachings received from Him, related by His earliest European devotee.

Guru Ramana by S.S.Cohen: Reminiscences about Sri Bhagavan and a record of many conversations with Him, concluding with a diary narrating the events of the last two years of His bodily life.

Letters and Recollections of Sri Ramanasramam by Suri Nagamma: 31 letters which were not included in the English version of *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*, together with some other reminiscences.

My Life at Sri Ramanasramam by Suri Nagamma: Further reminiscences by the author of *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*.

My Recollections of Bhagavan Sri Ramana by Devaraja Mudaliar: Reminiscences told in a charming and unassuming style by the author *of Day by Day with Bhagavan.*

My Reminiscences by N. Balarama Reddy: The author records his experiences with Sri Bhagavan.

Reminiscences by Kunju Swami: This staunch devotee records many rare incidents and about little known devotees of Sri Bhagavan.

Residual Reminiscences of Ramana by S.S. Cohen: A supplement to *Guru Ramana* by the same author.

Sri Ramana Reminiscences by G.V. Subbaramayya: A personal account of the author's moving experiences with Sri Bhagavan between the years 1933 and 1950.

Sri Ramana the Self Supreme by Prof K. Swaminathan: The author's talks and articles, describing the impact made on him by Sri Bhagavan, are presented here.

The Bloom of Inner Glory by N.N. Rajan: The author writes on Sri Bhagavan and explains his teachings in a clear manner.

The Guiding Presence of Sri Ramana by K.K. Nambiar: This devotee moved intimately with Sri Bhagavan. He recounts his profound experiences here.

MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS ON SRI BHAGAVAN

Arunachala: Holy Hill by R. Henninger: History of the Arunachala Hill. Also a useful guide book containing maps and descriptions of various sites around Arunachala.

Be Still, it is the Wind that Sings by Arthur Osborne: An anthology of inspiring essays and beautiful poems gathered from *The Mountain Path*.

Bhagavan and Nayana by S. Shankaranarayanan: An account of the relationship between Sri Bhagavan and His famous devotee Nayana (Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni). Also contains many of Nayana's works.

Buddhism and Christianity in the Light of Hinduism by Arthur Osborne: The author explains concepts of Advaita with clear illustrations of views and comparisions from Buddhism and Christianity.

For Those with Little Dust by Arthur Osborne: Editorials, articles and poems on Sri Bhagavan and his teachings, selected from *The Mountain Path*.

Forty Verses in Praise of Sri Ramana: An English translation of *Sri Ramana Chatvarimsat*, a Sanskrit hymn composed by Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni in praise of Sri Bhagavan. This hymn is chanted daily before the *Samadhi* of Sri Bhagavan.

The Garland of the Guru's Sayings (Guru Vachaka Kovai): Translated from Tamil by Prof K. Swaminathan from Sri Muruganar's original. This work in poetry form embodies a precise, systematic and authoritative exposition of the Maharshi's teachings.

Hunting the I according to Sri Ramana Maharshi by Lucy Cornelssen: A collection of essays on various aspects of the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan.

Ramana-Arunachala by Arthur Osborne: A collection of essays on the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan.

Ramana's Arunachala by Devotees of Sri Bhagavan: A compendium on Arunachala — the Hill, the temple, its history and legends — all lucidly explained with map and descriptions. Also an insight into Sri Bhagavan's life and his relationship with Arunachala. A guide for the tourist and seeker alike.

Sri Ramana Stuti Panchakam: An English translation of five Tamil songs composed by Satyamangalam Venkataramaiyer in praise of Sri Bhagavan.

Spiritual Stories as told by Sri Bhagavan: Sri Bhagavan was a consummate storyteller. This is a collection of stories of great devotees of the Lord as narrated by Sri Bhagavan.

The Cow Lakshmi by Devaraja Mudaliar: An account of the famous cow which attained liberation by the Grace of Sri Bhagavan.

The Glory of Arunachala by M.C. Subramanian: An adaptation from the Tamil translation of the original Sanskrit.

The Maharshi by Kapali Sastri: A collection of the author's dairy selections, articles and translations from Sanskrit compositions. Kapali Sastri was a devotee of Sri Bhagavan and disciple of Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni.

The Maharshi and His Message by Paul Brunton: A reprint of three chapters from *A Search in Secret India*, the book which first made Sri Bhagavan widely known outside India.

Thus Spake Ramana edited by Swami Rajeswarananda: A pocket-size book containing 125 passages selected from Sri Bhagavan's teachings.

Some Ancient Scriptures Referred to by Sri Bhagavan

***Advaita Bodha Deepika* (The Lamp of Non-Dual Knowledge):** An English translation by Munagala Venkataramiah (the recorder of *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi)* of a Sanskrit work by Sri Karapatra Swami.

Jewel Garland of Enquiry: An English translation of *Vichara Mani Malai;* a compilation by Sri Bhagavan of salient points from the Tamil version of *Vichara Sagara* (The Ocean of Enquiry), a voluminous work originally written in Hindi by Mahatma Nischaldas.

***Kaivalya Navaneeta* (The Cream of Emancipation):** An English translation by Munagala Venkataramiah of a classical Tamil work on Advaita philosophy.

The Song Celestial: 42 verses from the *Bhagavad Gita*, selected and reset by Sri Bhagavan, with an English translation and explanatory notes.

***Tripura Rahasya* (or The Mystery beyond the Trinity):** An English translation by Munagala Venkataramiah of an ancient Sanskrit work on Advaita philosophy.

Yoga Vasishta Sara: An English translation of 230 verses from the *Yoga Vasishta*.

Souvenir and Journal

Advent Centenary Souvenir: A collection of articles by devotees on Sri Bhagavan. Released on the occasion of the centenary celebrations of Sri Bhagavan's Advent at Arunachala in 1996.

Golden Jubilee Souvenir: A collection of articles by veteran devotees and scholars released on the occasion of Sri Bhagavan's completion of 50 years at Arunachala in 1946

Ramana Smrti: A souvenir published in 1980 to commemorate the birth centenary of Sri Bhagavan, consisting of more than 60 articles by devotees both old and new, many of which contain previously unpublished reminiscences.

The Mountain Path: A journal dedicated to Sri Bhagavan, the aim of which is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.
